

Brill's Companion to Silius Italicus

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Brill's Companion to Silius Italicus

Edited by
Antony Augoustakis



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On the cover: Snow Storm: Hannibal and his Army Crossing the Alps, by Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851). The Tate Gallery.

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To Kostas and Eleni
accessi comes, atque omnes sociaviimus annos
(*Punica* 6.129)

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FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Silius Italicus' *Punica* is the longest extant epic poem in Latin literature (12,202 verses). Its author commemorates in verse the events of the Second Punic War, the long struggle of the Romans against the Carthaginians (218–202 BC). From the sixth century to 1417, Silius' poem was lost. Unlike the works of Virgil and Lucan, Silius' text in its transmission lacked an accompanying body of ancient or medieval exegesis. Between the text's re-discovery in 1417 by Poggio at the monastery of St. Gall and its first printed edition, there was an interval of only 54 years, during which more than 34 manuscript copies were made. Although the seventeen-book epic poem enjoyed wide audiences in antiquity (cf. Martial's *Ep.* 4.14) and a favorable response among critics from its re-discovery in 1417 to the nineteenth century, early in the twentieth century, however, its reputation was eclipsed by the emergence of Virgil's *Aeneid* as the leading Latin epos of the Augustan period and by the subsequent refashioning of the literary canon. Michael von Albrecht's pioneering work on the poet in 1964 (*Silius Italicus: Freiheit und Gebundenheit römischer Epik*) refueled scholarly interest in Flavian epic poetry in general and in particular the mostly neglected ex-consul, Silius Italicus, who then began to receive attention not as an avid collector of art and close imitator of Virgil (cf. Pliny 3.7) but as a worthy successor of Virgilian diction and a creator of a poem competing with the *Aeneid* as the national epic of Domitianic Rome. Several philological and historical studies on the poem followed in the decades after 1964, on topics such as the relationship between Silius and other authors (Homer, Livy, and Virgil) and the role of the different heroes and the gods in the *Punica*. Especially from 1990 to the present, publications on all three Flavian Epic poets (Valerius Flaccus, Statius, and Silius Italicus) have multiplied. At the dissertation level alone, it is not an exaggeration to say that research on the Flavians rivals that on Augustan poets, especially Virgil. This trend is evident in the proliferation of presentations of papers on Flavian poetry in international conferences, where entire panels on Silius and Statius are now featured regularly.

The present volume continues this reinvigorated interest in the authors previously known as "poets of the Silver Age" (or even "of the

decline”), offering a detailed overview of Silius’ *Punica*, by placing the poem within its socio-historical context and by documenting its reception in the humanistic tradition of the Renaissance and subsequent centuries. In the following presentation of various aspects of the poem, we propose new venues of interpretation from different perspectives and schools of thought.

I would like to extend my warmest thanks to all the contributors to this *opus*, for the enthusiasm with which they embraced this project from its inception, and their co-operation that saw to its completion. I owe special thanks to Ray Marks, in particular, a fellow-Silian over the past fifteen years, who has kindly read and offered expert suggestions and corrections, linguistic and stylistic, on some of the essays. Bruce Gibson kindly read and commented on my Introduction, for which I thank him very much. I would like to thank the former Acquisitions Editor for Classical Studies at Brill, Irene van Rossum, for her expert advice on many matters and her support in the beginning steps of editing this companion, and Caroline van Erp for overseeing this volume through the end of the editorial process. I am grateful for the support I received from Baylor University, with a summer sabbatical in 2008 to complete a large portion of the volume’s draft; I thank personally Dean Lee Nordt for his support and my colleague and chair John Thorburn for his unstinting encouragement. My stay at Corpus Christi College at the University of Oxford as a Visiting Fellow in the autumn of 2008 allowed me the privilege of excellent hospitality, as well as the incomparable resources at the Bodleian, Sackler, and Corpus Christi College Libraries, for which I am grateful beyond words. Should I mention the sheer, immense pleasure of inspecting and consulting a copy of Ruperti’s famous commentary (avoiding the intermediary source of Lemaire’s edition), available at the CCC Library and not readily available in the USA?

Though several thousands miles away, my parents Georgia and Charidemos Augoustakis have always encouraged me with their love and affection in ways they do not even know, for which I will ever be in their debt. To my dear friends and fellow-Cretans, Eleni Manolaraki and Kostas Kourtikakis, as a token for their unconditional friendship and love, *hunc nouum libellum dono*.

Rome, Italy
Heraklion, Greece
June 2009

Antony Augoustakis

TEXTS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Greek authors and works are abbreviated according to the system of the *LSJ*, while Latin authors and works follow the system of the *OLD*. Any gaps are supplemented from the abbreviations of the *OCD*³. The abbreviation *Pun.* is used instead of *Sil.* Periodicals have been abbreviated based on *L'Année Philologique*:

- Hornblower, S., and Spawforth, A. (eds.) (1996) *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 3rd ed. Oxford.
 Souter, A., Wyllie, J. M., and Glare, P. G. W. (eds.) (1968–82) *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Oxford.
 Liddell, H. G., Scott, R., and Jones, H. S. (eds.) (1940) *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. Oxford.

Modern works

- ANRW* Vogt, J., Temporini, H., and Haase, W. (eds.) (1972–) *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. Berlin.
AR Chassignet, M. (ed.) (1996–2004) *L'annalistique romaine*. 3 vols. Paris.
BMC Mattingly, H. (ed.) (1930) *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum 2: Vespasian to Domitian*. London.
CTC Bassett, E. L., Delz, J., and Dunston, A. J., (1976) “Silius Italicus, Tiberius Catius Asconius,” in Cranz, F. E., and Kristeller, P. O. (eds.) *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum: Medieval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries. Annotated Lists and Guides* 3. Washington: 341–98.
FGrH Jacoby, F. (ed.) (1923–) *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Leiden.
HRRel Hermann, P. (1906–14) *Historicorum Romanorum Reliquiae*. 2 vols. Stuttgart.
LIMC *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*. (ed.) (1981–) Zurich.
PMG Page, D. L. (ed.) (1962) *Poetae Melici Graeci*. Oxford.
RE Pauly, A., Wissowa, G., and Kroll, W. (eds.) (1893–1980) *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart/Munich.
TLL *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. (ed.) (1900–) Leipzig.

Ancient Greek and Latin Texts

The consonantal ‘v’ and ‘j’ in the Latin texts has been printed as ‘u’ and ‘i’ and ‘V’ and ‘I’ in capitals. The following standard editions have been used for quotations from the original Greek and Latin texts (*BT* = Bibliotheca Teubneriana; *OCT* = Oxford Classical Texts):

Appian	Viereck, P., and Roos, A.G. <i>BT</i> 1962.
Aristotle’s <i>Ars Poetica</i>	Kassel, R. <i>OCT</i> 1965.
Aulus Gellius	Marshall, P. K. <i>OCT</i> 1968.
Cicero’s <i>De Re Publica</i>	Powell, J. G. F. <i>OCT</i> 2006.
Homer’s <i>Iliad</i>	Monro, D. B., and Allen, T. W. <i>OCT</i> 1920.
Homer’s <i>Odyssey</i>	Allen, T. W. <i>OCT</i> 1917.
Juvenal	Clausen, W. V. <i>OCT</i> 1992.
Livy 1–5	Ogilvie, R. M. <i>OCT</i> 1974.
Livy 21–25	Walters, C. F., and Conway, R. S. <i>OCT</i> 1967.
Livy 26–30	Conway, R. S., and Johnson, S. K. <i>OCT</i> 1968.
Lucan	Shackleton Bailey <i>BT</i> 1997 ² .
Lucretius	Bailey, C. <i>OCT</i> 1922.
Martial	Shackleton Bailey, D. R. <i>BT</i> 1990.
Ovid’s <i>Metamorphoses</i>	Tarrant, R. J. <i>OCT</i> 2004.
Pliny the Elder	Mayhoff, C. <i>BT</i> 1892.
Pliny the Younger	Mynors, R. A. B. <i>OCT</i> 1963.
Plutarch’s <i>Lives</i>	Ziegler, K. <i>BT</i> 1960–.
Polybius	Buettner-Wobst, T. <i>BT</i> 1905.
Propertius	Heyworth, S. J. <i>OCT</i> 2007.
Sallust	Reynolds, R. D. <i>OCT</i> 1991.
Seneca’s <i>Dialogi</i>	Reynolds, R. D. <i>OCT</i> 1977.
Seneca’s <i>Epistulae</i>	Reynolds, R. D. <i>OCT</i> 1965.
Servius	Thilo, G., and Hagen, H. <i>BT</i> 1881–1900.
Silius Italicus’ <i>Punica</i>	Delz, J. <i>BT</i> 1987.
Statius’ <i>Thebaid</i>	Hill, D. E. (ed.) (1996 ²) <i>P. Papini Stati Thebaidos Libri XII</i> . Leiden.
Statius’ <i>Silvae</i>	Courtney, E. <i>OCT</i> 1992.
Suetonius’ <i>Lives</i>	Ihm, M. <i>BT</i> 1908.
Tacitus’ <i>Agricola</i>	Winterbottom, M., and Ogilvie, R. M. <i>OCT</i> 1975.

Thucydides	Jones, H. S., and Powell, J. E. <i>OCT</i> 1942.
Valerius Maximus	Briscoe, J. <i>BT</i> 1998.
Virgil	Mynors, R. A. B. <i>OCT</i> 1969.

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Ben Tipping is Assistant Professor of Classics at Harvard University (Massachusetts, USA). His book, *Exemplary Epic: Silius Italicus' Punica*, will appear soon from Oxford University Press.

A. Introduction

CHAPTER ONE

SILIUS ITALICUS, A FLAVIAN POET

Antony Augoustakis*

Perpetui numquam moritura uolumina Sili
qui legis et Latia carmina digna toga,
Pierios tantum uati placuisse recessus
credis et Aoniae Bacchica sarta comae?
sacra cothurnati non attigit ante Maronis
impleuit magni quam Ciceronis opus:
hunc miratur adhuc centum grauis hasta uirorum,
hunc loquitur grato plurimus ore cliens.
(Mart. 7.63.1–8)

Reader of the everlasting volumes of immortal Silius, poems worthy of the Latin toga, do you think that only Pierian retreats and Bacchic garlands for Aonian locks have pleased the bard? He did not put his hand to buskined Maro's mysteries before he filled the measure of great Cicero's work. The solemn spear of the Hundred Men still wonders at him, and a host of clients speak of him with gratitude.¹

adeo uero ab omni uenere alienus est...

J. C. Scaliger²

That longest of Latin poems, the *Punica* of Silius Italicus, is not much read nowadays, even by the professional Latinist. Bassett (1953) 155

Martial admired Silius' immortal *uolumina*, but readers since antiquity have not always been so kind, as Scaliger in the Renaissance and Bassett in the twentieth century attest. This state of affairs is due, in part,

* I thank William Dominik and Bruce Gibson for many helpful comments and suggestions.

¹ Translation taken from Shackleton Bailey (1993) with modifications.

² See von Albrecht for full citation (1964) 10.

to Pliny's famous pronouncement *maiore cura quam ingenio*,³ which inaugurated a series of negative assessments of the *Punica*, punctuating philological work on the Flavian poet into the early decades of the past century.⁴ The effects of this harsh trend can still be felt today and are evident even in the most recent, critical edition of the *Punica*, where its editor, the late Joseph Delz, confesses: *Silii edendi consilium cepi non admiratione quidem poetae mediocris instinctus* ("I decided to edit Silius, certainly not out of admiration for the mediocre poet"). And yet, as William Dominik argues in his closing essay in this volume, critics often fail to observe that Pliny records the deaths of just two poets in the third book of his *Epistulae*, Martial's and Silius Italicus', both of whom, for being acknowledged in this way, stand out as prominent figures in the literary milieu of late first century Rome. As Bassett (1953) has demonstrated, the negative judgment of Silius in European literary criticism (which was transmitted into American philological circles as well) is largely a product of the twentieth century; in England from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century, the *Punica* was widely read and admired. Moreover, at the turn of the twenty-first century, we are witnessing a radical change in the study of the Flavian poets: monographs and volumes on Flavian Rome and the Flavian literary production are multiplying and are providing a new impetus to the study of this period of Latin literature, once overshadowed by the focus on the great Roman poets of the Augustan age (Virgil and Ovid in particular).⁵ Some 45 years after the appearance of von Albrecht's 1964 fundamental monograph, a new scholarly study of the *Punica* no longer needs to justify itself.

³ See Laudizi (1989) 19–24; Matier (1989a); Lefèvre (1989); Gagliardi (1990); Henderson (2002) 108 and n. 65; and Dominik in this volume for a re-examination and re-evaluation of Pliny's words *maiore cura quam ingenio*, not as negative criticism but as an aesthetic judgment (431–32). McDermott and Orentzel (1977) argue that Pliny's assessment may also be explained by a possible rivalry between the two men, especially if we assume that Pliny was never invited by Silius to Campania or to Rome, whereas Martial profited from the patronage of Silius. As Spaltenstein (1986) xx puts it: "il vaudrait mieux regarder Silius avec plus d'attention et relativiser ce jugement: après tout, c'est l'avis d'un seul homme, et qui n'était peut-être pas si bon juge que cela." On Silius' diction and style, see Franke (1889); Miniconi and Devallet (1979) lxxxviii–xcix; Flammini (1988); Hernáez (1990); and Vinchesi (2001) 68–72.

⁴ Delz (1987) v. See also, e.g., Tandoi (1985) 160: "Silio è poeta mediocre e senza personalità..." See Dominik in this volume for an extensive discussion.

⁵ For instance, consider the renewed interest in Statius' *Thebaid*, as reflected in the most recent books by Ganiban (2007) and McNelis (2007); on the *Achilleid*, see Heslin (2005) and on Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, see Hershkovitz (1998b).

1. *A glimpse into Silius' life*

Among our best sources for the life of Tiberius Catius Asconius Silius Italicus are Martial's numerous *Epigrams* (4.16, 6.64, 7.63, 8.66, 9.86, 11.48, and 11.50) and, especially, Pliny's obituary (*Epist.* 3.7). Here is the important, central piece of Pliny's narrative:⁶

Laeserat famam suam sub Nerone (credebatur sponte accusasse), sed in Vitelli amicitia sapienter se et comiter gesserat, ex proconsulatu Asiae gloriam reportauerat, maculam ueteris industriae laudabili otio abluerat. Fuit inter principes ciuitatis sine potentia, sine inuidia: salutabatur colebatur, multumque in lectulo iacens cubiculo semper, non ex fortuna frequenti, doctissimis sermonibus dies transigebat, cum a scribendo uacaret. Scribebat carmina maiore cura quam ingenio, non numquam iudicia hominum recitationibus experiebatur. Nouissime ita suadentibus annis ab urbe secessit, seque in Campania tenuit, ac ne aduentu quidem noui principis inde commotus est...Erat φιλόκαλος usque ad emacitatis reprehensionem. Plures isdem in locis uillas possidebat, adamatisque nouis priores neglegebat. Multum ubique librorum, multum statuarum, multum imaginum, quas non habebat modo, uerum etiam uenerabatur, Vergili ante omnes, cuius natalem religiosius quam suum celebrabat, Neapoli maxime, ubi monimentum eius adire ut templum solebat.

(Plin. *Ep.* 3.7.3–8)

He had damaged his reputation under Nero (it was believed that he had offered his services as an informer of his own accord), but he had maintained his friendship with Vitellius with tact and wisdom, won fame for his conduct as governor of Asia, and removed the stigma of his former activities by his honorable retirement. He ranked as one of our leading citizens without exercising influence or incurring ill-will; he was waited on and sought after, and spent many hours on his couch in a room thronged with callers who had come with no thought of his rank; and so passed his days in cultured conversation whenever he could spare time from his writing. He took great pains over his verses, more than inspiration, and frequently submitted them to public criticism by the readings he gave. Lately his increasing age led to his retirement from Rome; he made his home in Campania and never left it again, not even on the arrival of the new emperor...He was a great connoisseur; indeed he was criticized for buying too much. He owned several houses in the same district, but lost interest in the older ones in his enthusiasm for the newer ones. In each of them he had quantities of books, statues, and portrait busts, and these were more to him than possessions—they

⁶ See the extensive introduction in Miniconi and Devallet (1979); more recently Frölich (2000) 1–9, Vinchesi (2001) 78–79, and extensively Dominik in this volume (428–31). On Silius' ethnic origins, see also Dominik in this volume (428).

became objects of his devotion, particularly in the case of Virgil, whose birthday he celebrated with more solemnity than his own, and at Naples especially, where he would visit Virgil's tomb as if it were a temple.⁷

Silius' life spans much of the first century AD: born around AD 26 (between 25 and 29), he dies around AD 102 (between 101 and 106). Further important details are furnished by Martial's and Pliny's references to Silius' forensic career, probably in the last years of Claudius' reign, his infamous role as a *delator* under Nero, and his subsequent appointment as consul in AD 68. The poet's consular career coincides with the tumultuous events of the last year of Nero's reign and the transition to a new form of imperial rule, no longer associated with the Julio-Claudian house. Another important piece of information comes from Tacitus, who speaks of Silius' role as a witness in the secret negotiations between Vitellius and Flavius Sabinus, Vespasian's brother (*Hist.* 3.65). After Silius completes a proconsular assignment in Asia (AD 77), he returns to Rome: Pliny underscores his withdrawal from public affairs, and his ensuing devotion to poetry (some time between AD 78 and 80). By the publication of the fourth book of Martial's epigrams (around AD 88), Silius has already won for himself a literary reputation, a fact consistent with Pliny's observation that he often hosted *recitationes*. In addition to the consulship of his son, Lucius Silius Decianus, in AD 94 and the death of his younger son, Severus, the poet's withdrawal in Campania (perhaps in AD 95–96) is a focal point in Pliny's biography; there we see Silius the art collector and devotee of Virgil enjoying his coveted *otium*. At the dawn of the second century AD, Silius opts for a Stoic exit from life to put an end to his long suffering from an incurable disease.⁸

2. *The poem's composition*

postquam bis senis ingentem fascibus annum
rexerat adserto qui sacer orbe fuit,
emeritos Musis et Phoebo tradidit annos
proque suo celebrat nunc Helicon a foro.

(Mart. 7.63.9–12)

⁷ Translation taken from Radice (1963) with modifications.

⁸ For Silius and Stoicism, see Billerbeck (1986a) and (1986b) with further bibliography and Dominik in this volume (429–30). Cf. Epict. 3.8.7: Ἰταλικὸς ὁ μάλιστα δοκῶν αὐτῶν φιλόσοφος εἶναι ("Italicus, who seems to be the most philosophical of them").

After he had ruled with twelve *fascēs* the mighty year
made sacred by a world set free, he gave his years
of retirement to Phoebus and the Muses, and now
frequents Helicon instead of the Forum.

A crucial question concerning the composition of the *Punica* is the date of Silius' withdrawal from the hustle and bustle of public affairs and his subsequent dedication to his poem on the Second Punic War.⁹ Martial's assertion in 7.63 above (composed in about AD 92) has led critics to conclude that by this time the poet had already finished three, ten, or twelve books.¹⁰ Internal evidence often constitutes another *crux* in the complicated chronology of the *Punica*'s composition. Consider, for instance, the *elogium principis*, embedded in Jupiter's prophecy on the future of the *gens Flavia* in the third book of the poem (3.594–629). Reference to the emperor Domitian as *Germanicus* (3.607) has been thought to allude to the victory over the Chatti in AD 83, whereas a reference to a war against the Sarmatians (3.616–17) has been either used as clear evidence for dating the book to AD 92 or interpreted as a wishful prophecy on the part of the poet for victories yet to come (after AD 83).¹¹ To be sure, behind the question of the work's composition lies another difficulty: is the poet composing his individual books in order or is he working on them out of order?¹² If we follow the more traditional view (the former) of the two, then we may assume that Silius probably begins around AD 80/81 and, at a pace of a book per year, he probably finishes his poem just after Domitian's death in AD 96/97.¹³ The second approach, however, leaves room for speculation about Silius' addressees: Domitian may not be after all the only emperor mentioned in the poem; his successor Nerva may be alluded

⁹ Miniconi and Devallet (1979) xv support the dating his departure from the city to AD 95–96, *pace* Friedländer (1886) 342, who supposes Martial met Silius in Campania in AD 88. For a detailed overview of the different theories concerning the dating of the poem, see Frölich (2000) 9–18.

¹⁰ Bickel (1911), Buchwald (1886), and Legras (1905) respectively.

¹¹ Wistrand (1956) 7–19 (early dating), followed by Laudizi (1989) 27–54; *contra* Frölich (2000) 12–13 (late dating). See also Dominik in this volume (430–31 and 444–45).

¹² Wistrand (1956) follows the standard view in Latin studies of a linear composition, whereas Frölich (2000) supports the “dynamic” composition approach, i.e., of working on different episodes and books at any given time.

¹³ Marks (2005a) 287–88. Cf. Silius' comment in *Pun.* 14.686 on the final imposition of peace on the world by a single *uir*, who may be Nerva or Trajan.

to in certain places as well.¹⁴ There are still other vexing questions regarding the chronology of the poem's composition. Did old age or an illness force Silius to quit and thus leave his epic *opus* unfinished?¹⁵ And what about possible intertextual relations among the three Flavian epicists?¹⁶ As the epic poems of Statius, Valerius Flaccus, and Silius Italicus are all products of the same era and commonly reflect the anxieties of the Flavian age, their influence on each other surely deserves a closer study in the future, as Dominik points out (446), and such study may, furthermore, shed light on the issue of chronology.

An inquiry into the composition of the *Punica* must also address the larger structure or *Aufbau* of the poem, which is itself intertwined with the question of its intended length, seventeen (as it now stands) or eighteen books (after the model of Ennius' *Annales*, but left unfinished). The poem opens with an introduction to the causes of the war and Hannibal's siege of Saguntum (books 1–2) and then moves on to the Carthaginian's crossing of the Pyrenees and the Alps (book 3). The Roman catastrophes at the Ticinus and the Trebia occupy the fourth book, with book 5 dedicated to the equally disastrous battle at Lake Trasimene. In book 6, Silius digresses on the exploits of Regulus in Africa and Rome during the First Punic War, while in book 7 the poet turns to Fabius' delaying tactics, which for some time succeed in saving the Romans from further defeat. In books 8–10, however, the core of

¹⁴ Frölich (2000) 18 observes that in 13.601–12, where Proserpina judges the *crimina regum* and the tyrants, we may have an allusion to the new regime of Nerva or Trajan.

¹⁵ See Pomeroy (1989) 127: "[T]here is no reason to attribute the brevity of Silius' account of the battle of Zama to failing health. Silius very probably envisaged the scope of his epic before he began its composition, and his careful, methodological production would have given him plenty of time for revision of the last book if he had felt that necessary."

¹⁶ See Ripoll (1998a) 3–8. Ripoll maintains that Silius has used the *Thebaid*, after its publication in AD 92, although Statius probably used the *Punica* during the composition of his own epic first. Ripoll identifies some minor similarities between Valerius and Silius, but otherwise does not embrace the notion that the former influenced the latter (1998a, 7–8); cf. Perutelli (1997) 16, 41–42. Even so, it is difficult to deny Silius' being in intertextual dialogue with Valerius, since Valerius probably died around AD 79, as Stover maintains (2008). Smolenaars (1996) underscores the need for more comparative work on Flavian epic and in his 1994 commentary, especially its introduction, addresses the issue of chronological order in Flavian epic. In my opinion, Steele (1930) is right to conclude that there is interaction among the three Flavian epicists, and Bassett (1959) offers a good examination and proof of their interrelation. For a recent discussion of links among these poets, see Lovatt (2006) on Statius and Valerius Flaccus and in this volume (155–76).

the poem, we witness the bloody battle of Cannae and its aftermath. Book 11 marks the beginning of the end for the Carthaginian army, as it sojourns in Capua and succumbs to luxury and sloth. In book 12, Hannibal surveys Campania, before he launches a futile attack against Rome itself, which is defended by Jupiter. An *excursus* on Scipio's trip to the underworld in book 13 is followed by Marcellus' victory in Sicily in the next book. In book 15, Scipio leads a successful Spanish campaign, and Tiberius Claudius Nero and his colleague Livius Salinator conquer Hasdrubal's army at the Metaurus; in book 16, Scipio celebrates the funeral games for the deaths of his father and uncle in Spain. Finally, book 17 narrates Hannibal's withdrawal from Italian soil and the decisive battle at Zama.

The *Makrostruktur* of the poem has been the subject of many critical discussions and theories, the tendency being to divide its books into groups with thematic links between and among them.¹⁷ Those who propose that the *Punica* was intended to comprise eighteen books, but is unfinished have divided the poem either into three hexads or into two halves,¹⁸ whereas those who study the structure of the poem in its received, seventeen-book form have identified three uneven parts, each critic assigning different books to each part: e.g., books 1–2, 3–10, 11–17;¹⁹ books 1–7, 8–10, 11–17;²⁰ or three pentads (books 1–5, 7–11, 13–17), with books 6 and 12 occupying a privileged place in the narrative (the digression on the First Punic War and Hannibal's attack on Rome, respectively).²¹ In recent years, critics have increasingly regarded the poem as a finished product and have emphasized the importance of the number seventeen: it corresponds to the number of years of the war²² and is, moreover, not inconsistent with ancient practice, whereby poems or books may appear in odd numbers, as

¹⁷ For a detailed overview of the various theories, see Frölich (2000) 18–28.

¹⁸ Martin (1946) modified by Kißel (1979) 177–84 for the three hexads, while Wallace (1955) 211–18 proposes two halves consisting of nine books each. The most recent supporter of the eighteen-book theory is Delarue (1992).

¹⁹ Niemann (1975) 3–36.

²⁰ Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2505–11, followed by Braun (1993), with emphasis on books 9–10, as the center of the epic poem.

²¹ Frölich (2000) 50–58.

²² von Albrecht (1964) 133 n. 35.

in Pindar, Philochorus' *Atthis*, the *Historiae* of Asinius Pollio, Strabo's *Geography*,²³ or Horace's seventeen poems in the *Epodes*.²⁴

3. *Sources*

Pliny lays emphasis on Silius' love of art and literature, a quality neatly captured by the Greek adjective φιλόκαλος, and the *Punica* itself reflects his wide knowledge not only of poetry but also of history, philosophy, geography, and ethnography. And yet, as Marks has rightly observed, the *Punica* is an anomaly in Flavian epic poetry; Silius' contemporaries preferred compositions based on mythological themes, as Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* and Statius' *Thebaid* and *Achilleid* amply attest.²⁵ This is not to say, however, that Silius' marriage of history and epic was unique in the history of Latin literature. The composer of the *Punica* follows in the footsteps of early imperial poets of historical epic, such as Cornelius Severus, Albinovanus Pedo,²⁶ and especially Lucan, whose poem on civil war deeply influenced all epic poets of the post-Virgilian era. But Silius also extensively refashions the Lucanian model of the *epos togatum* and in doing so looks back to a still earlier, republican tradition of historical epic, such as Gnaeus Naevius and Ennius.²⁷ It is unfortunate, however, that the fragmentary state of these earlier poets does not allow us to appreciate the depth and full extent of their influence on the *Punica*.²⁸

²³ Häussler (1978) 259.

²⁴ Frölich (2000) 57.

²⁵ Marks (2005c) 528.

²⁶ On Cornelius and Albinovanus, see Courtney (1993) 315–28 and now Hollis (2007) frs. 203–220 and 225–28.

²⁷ For instance, Silius re-introduces the divine machinery. Cf. Feeney's (1991) 301–12 criticism on the subject.

²⁸ For Ennius' role in the *Punica* as a historical figure who fights in the war in Sardinia in book 12 (387–419), see Pinto (1953), Runchina (1982), and most recently Casali (2006), Manuwald (2007) 71–82 for further bibliography (73 n. 1), and Dorf-bauer (2008). See Prinzen (1998) 390–92 for an overview of whether Silius has immediate access to Ennius' works; cf. Manuwald who believes he does (2007, 75–76 n. 4), and whose view I espouse. Unfortunately, we cannot even glimpse into the nature and extent of the influence of poems that have not survived, such as the *Bellum Histricum* of Hostius, the *Bellum Sequanicum* of Varro Atacinus, the *Annales* of Furius Bibaculus, Albinovanus Pedo's poem on Germanicus' expedition, Cornelius Severus' *Bellum Siculum*, or Rabirius' (?) *Bellum Actiacum*.

While many critics have identified allusions to epic predecessors such as Homer,²⁹ Virgil,³⁰ and Lucan,³¹ there is still a need for an in-depth analysis of the poet's allusive method and of the ways in which it informs our understanding of the larger frame of his narrative; the *Punica* is, after all, the "most intertextual of poems."³² As Manuwald has most recently observed eloquently:

Silius Italicus comes to terms with his predecessors by assigning them specific functions: in contrast to Ennius and also Vergil himself...he does not claim to introduce something new into Roman epic, thereby discarding predecessors, but accepts their existence by casting them in the role of founders, who have a position in their own right... Thus Silius Italicus can place himself in the epic tradition initiated by them, without committing himself to 'secondariness' or having to profess novelty... [He] is deeply steeped in the epic tradition and at the same time self-confident enough to define his own position within it. In this process his own poetic design becomes apparent: on the basis of his experience of Roman public life and his familiarity with the epic tradition, he writes a thoroughly Roman epic, indirectly connected with the history of Troy, in the noble metre of the hexameter, and thereby commits the achievements of historical Romans to memory and even enhances their status.³³

There are still others who have made significant contributions to our understanding of Silius' intertextual dialogue with his predecessors. Bruère and Bassett, for example, have supplied us with substantial collections of allusions,³⁴ and Venini has done well to elucidate the multi-layered character of Silius' engagement with Greco-Roman authors:

Si tratta di una tecnica abile e raffinata che alcune volte ritrae fedelmente, altre volte, invece, muta proporzioni, distorce prospettive, altera rapporti, modifica dettagli, trasforma, per così dire, in tessere di mosaico

²⁹ Juhnke (1972) studies extensively Homer's influence on Statius and Silius. See also Ripoll (2001) on Homer. On the tribute to Homer in the *nekyia* of the thirteenth book, see Manuwald (2007) 82–87.

³⁰ See von Albrecht (1964), 166–184 for bibliography prior to 1964. Gossage's article (1969) was seminal for an examination of Virgil's influence on the Flavian poets. Today, Hardie (1993a) remains an invaluable study in this regard.

³¹ See Meyer (1924); Schönberger (1965); Häußler (1978); and Brouwers (1982) for a study of Lucan's influence on Flavian epic in general and on Silius in particular.

³² Wilson (2004) 248; cf. Pomeroy (1989). Consider, for instance, aphorisms, such as "Silio Italico non ama i personaggi femminili" (La Penna [1981] 234) that still plague with prejudice some of the scholarship of the *Punica*.

³³ Manuwald (2007) 89–90.

³⁴ See Bruère (1952), (1958), and (1959); Bassett (1955), (1959), (1963), and (1966).

quelli che in Livio erano pezzi di congegni, ma ubbidisce sempre chiaramente a una precisa funzione di richiamo.³⁵

The historical content of the *Punica* has also invited numerous studies (which Dominik extensively lists in his essay) on Silius' use of prose historiography. Scholars, dating back to Silius' earliest commentators, such as Ruperti,³⁶ have scoured the pages of the third decade of Livy's *Ab urbe condita* (books 21–30) in search of connections with the Flavian poet³⁷ and have established the historian as a likely primary source. Departures from Livy's version of events in the *Punica*, however, point to Silius' use of other sources, such as the annalist Valerius Antias (who possibly relied on Fabius Pictor and was used by Dionysius of Halicarnassus) and Valerius Maximus. Even later authors such as Plutarch and Appian have been mined for information and have adumbrated Silius' compositional technique.³⁸

In an effort to elucidate Silius' relation to his predecessors and contemporaries, the second part of this volume consists of a systematic exploration of the *Context and Intertext* of the *Punica*. The first two essays explore the *Punica* as a historical epic, situating it both within and outside of the traditional boundaries of Roman historiography. Arthur Pomeroy's study, which focuses on Livy, examines the places where Silius cultivates an intertextual relationship with his predecessor. Pomeroy shows that attempts to mine the *Punica* for evidence of historical sources other than Livy do not present an accurate picture of Silius' technique; for allusions to Livy's preface at the beginning of the *Punica* make it clear that the poet is situating his epic in the ethical setting of Livian historiography. As Silius Italicus was a well-read man, "the choice of works available to him makes the identification of authors who might have suggested thematic variations in any individual case almost impossible" (31). Pomeroy demonstrates that the Flavian poet follows certain storylines in Livy or sources used by the historian—

³⁵ Venini (1972b) 542.

³⁶ Ruperti (1795–98), available through Lemaire (1823).

³⁷ Especially the dissertations of eminent German scholars in the second half of the nineteenth century, such as Wezel (1873) and Bauer (1883) among others.

³⁸ Cf. Heynacher (1877); Klotz (1933); Nicol (1936). Nicol excludes Silius' recourse to the annalist Coelius Antipater's account. See Miniconi and Devallet (1979) xlv–xlvi, who considers Silius' use of Polybius implausible; *contra* Gibson in this volume (47–72). On historical sources, see also Nesselrath (1986) and Lucarini (2004) with Spaltenstein's (2006) response.

what he calls a “Thucydidean narrative”—in addition to adapting certain Livian passages for his use in other parts of the poem. What emerges from this perceptive analysis is that Silius “both parades his debt to Livy and highlights the Thucydidean aspects of the historian, either having perceived these from his own reading of Thucydides or from reading authors who had been influenced by Thucydides” (43). As Pomeroy concludes, Silius’ appeal to the Roman past can thus be viewed both as “reactionary” and oddly innovative.

In the second essay on this topic, Bruce Gibson considers Silius’ relation to Livy and other accounts of the Second Punic War to show how the poet draws on and exploits historiographical techniques and concerns (speech presentation, narrative structure, ideas of historical progress or decline, topography and ethnography). Gibson underlines the need in Silian scholarship to move on from the already well-trodden path of *Quellenforschung* and to explore new and different ways of thinking about the poet’s exploitation of historiographical predecessors and other prose authors. Silius, for example, uses not only Livy but also Polybius “to generate a complex engagement through historiography with epic traditions” (54). The *Punica*, he suggests, should be understood in terms of both poetry and historiography. Illustrative is his discussion of the passage on Acestes and Elymus in *Punica* 14, where he points out: “the subtlety of the poet’s approach may be seen in terms of how what on the surface appears to be an engagement with the detail of *Aeneid* 5, turns out to be something which itself emulates the controversies of historiography. Thus even a poetic text, such as the *Aeneid*, can generate a response that evokes historiography” (62–63). For Gibson the key is to think of historical epic “not in terms of history but in terms of historiography” (70).

The following two essays in this section of the volume call the reader’s attention to the much-discussed relationship between Silius and Virgil, who is a major poetic source for the *Punica*. An important aspect of Silius’ Virgilian poetics comes to the surface in Randall Ganiban’s essay on the figure of Dido. Ganiban argues that Dido’s defining role in the *Punica* is that of the mythical queen who both “shapes Hannibal’s character and explains the tragic nature of his heroism” (74). Through analysis of revealing passages, such as Hannibal’s oath in book 1, his shield in book 2, the murals at Liternum in book 6, and the story of Dido’s sister Anna in book 8, Ganiban explores how Dido’s own perception of Aeneas and fate in the *Aeneid* (what Ganiban calls

“further voice”) is embodied in Silius’ Hannibal. The Carthaginian is thus defined “by mythological and literary connections that both motivate and limit his actions throughout the epic. By taking up Dido’s curse and Juno’s hatred, he is replaying a role from the *Aeneid* that cannot succeed” (83). In the ekphrasis of Hannibal’s shield, for instance, Ganiban observes how “Carthaginian history is presented as moving in a direct arc from Dido to Hannibal, painting him as an almost mythic figure” (87). The figure of Dido in the poem thus sheds light on Hannibal’s own heroism, the Carthaginian conceptualization of history, and the workings of the gods and fate in the war against Rome.

Elizabeth Kennedy Klaassen examines how Silius copies Virgil’s technique of imitation by setting up alternate models for his characters: Hannibal can be viewed as both Aeneas and Turnus, just as in the *Aeneid* Turnus’ Homeric models are both Achilles and Hector. This typology of Hannibal as Aeneas, Klaassen submits, underlines a “stable irony”: “Rome’s greatest enemy is cast as its founder, and contrary to Hannibal’s wishes, he does turn out to be like Aeneas in establishing Rome’s supremacy” (105). During the course of the poem, therefore, the reader is faced with questions, such as: “Will Hannibal be like Aeneas, the foreign invader who fought and won a war in Italy and then established his line of descendants? Or will he be like Turnus, the leader of the losing side in the war” (103–4)? As the critic suggests, the poet exploits the model of Aeneas for Hannibal “to suggest the unfulfilled possibility of Carthaginian world rule instead of Roman” (104). Klaassen’s discussion moves from Hannibal’s visit to Campania in book 12, a conspicuous instance of his failure as an epic hero, to Scipio’s portrayal in the *nekylia* of book 13 with extensive imitation of *Aeneid* 6 and *Odyssey* 11, “which presents Scipio as taking on the roles of Aeneas and Odysseus” (106).

The final two essays of the second section focus on the Roman epicists of the first century AD, Lucan and Statius. Ray Marks discusses how Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Cato in Lucan’s *De bello civili* function as models for Silius’ heroes and suggests that the prominence of the themes of civil war and self-destruction in the *Punica* (e.g., Saguntum, Rome in books 4–10, Cannae, Capua, Carthage) and Silius’ treatment of them owe much to Lucan’s epic. Marks also examines the similarities and differences between the two poets’ concepts of history, their views on epic poetry, and their understanding of the link between moral decline and political change. Specifically, he identifies two major

trends in the poem's allusions to its epic predecessor: "in books 1–10, where the Carthaginians mostly have the upper hand, allusions to Lucan regularly identify the Romans and their allies with those who suffer, are defeated, or are killed in civil war; whereas in books 11–17, where the Romans mostly have the upper hand, it is the Carthaginians who are so identified" (129). Allusions to Lucan, furthermore, invite us to read the beginning of each phase or seminal events within it "in connection with 'beginnings' or 'firsts' in the *De bello ciuili* and to read the end of each phase in connection with the death and decapitation of Pompey in *De bello ciuili* 8" (129–30). Consequently, as the poem (and the war) nears its end, Hannibal increasingly "becomes like Pompey, who throughout Lucan's *De bello ciuili* is similarly distinguished by slowness, delay, and indecision" (148). For Marks, by evoking civil war in the epic, Silius also "gives a contemporary resonance to his story, inviting his readers to compare the events of the distant past with the present and to learn from them" (151).

Helen Lovatt explores the cut and thrust of poetic competition between two contemporaries, Silius and Statius. Lovatt uses the athletic contests in book 16 as a showcase of the relationship between the *Punica* and *Thebaid* 6, an interesting, yet heretofore understudied, area in Flavian epic scholarship. Most strikingly, as Lovatt shows, Silius includes a miniature version of the *Thebaid* in his gladiatorial combat between two brothers during the games in honor of Scipio's father, but also reverses polemically the outcome of the foot-race recounted in *Thebaid* 6. Other points of contact, however, work well if read in the opposite direction (i.e., Statius alluding to Silius). After all, recitation and on-going revision would have allowed for mutual allusion and influence between these two grand, self-conscious works. Lovatt's reading of the two poems backwards and forwards constitutes an innovative way of looking at the two poets, in that it sets aside the question of chronology and focuses, instead, on how the two poets are writing, or at least reciting and revising, at the same time. "This allows us to see true interplay, an athletic poetics at work, in which both self-consciously compete with each other, belittle, exceed, suppress, sanitize, miniaturize, questioning each other's choices and their own" (175–76). In the contests examined by Lovatt, Statius sometimes seems to imply that Silius' games are not *proper* epic games but rather go "beyond the bounds of epic acceptability" (161), whereas Silius appears to be reworking Statius in an effort to outdo him.

As is clear from this overview of the essays presented in this section, it would be a mistake to call the *Punica* a versified history of the Second Punic War. Rather it is an epicization of history.³⁹

4. *Heroism and characterization*

Silius' epicization of history, however, lacks a clear-cut hero or a single protagonist in the poem.⁴⁰ There are, instead, many characters who take up this role throughout the poem: Hannibal or Scipio, or even Fabius and Marcellus. What we witness in this historical epic of the Flavian period, therefore, is a departure from the Virgilian model, from an Aeneas who is the central figure of the poem and around whom is built a nexus of relationships that propels the poem forward. To be sure, Hannibal in the *Punica* appears on center stage,⁴¹ yet there is always someone who serves as a foil to him, whether it is Fabius, Paulus, Marcellus or, ultimately, Scipio. Moreover, it is telling that as Scipio emerges as the final conqueror of the Carthaginian foe, Hannibal's strength fades. One of the two shall remain, the other has to be annihilated.

The contributions in the third section of the Companion cover a wide array of *Themes and Images* in the *Punica*. In the first subsection, four scholars address the question of exemplary heroism. Paolo Asso opens this section by looking at the role of Hercules in the *Punica* and by tracing the cultic and literary elements that make up Hercules' paradigmatic heroism. Previous scholars have viewed Hercules either

³⁹ See von Albrecht (1964) 9–14 on the different views on how “epic” or how “historical” the poem is. See also Spaltenstein (2006) 717: “on oublie trop souvent que Silius n’est pas un historien... Je ne crois pas, notamment, que Silius ait travaillé avec Tite-Live à côté de lui, ni avec ses autres sources ouvertes devant lui, mais il a composé principalement en puisant dans ses souvenirs et en mêlant divers récits historiques, même si c’est naturellement Tite-Live qu’il devait le mieux connaître et relire à l’occasion...” Cf. Lundström (1971), 41: “Silius Italicus wollte sich damit nicht begnügen, die Darstellung des Livius in Verse zu bringen. Sein Ziel war, ein wirkliches Epos nach dem Vorbild Vergils zustandezubringen. Zur Haupthandlung, die natürlich mit der Darstellung des Livius übereinstimmen mußte, fügte er Episoden hinzu, die er auf eigene Faust erdichtete.”

⁴⁰ Heroism in the *Punica* is a topic of discussion in all major books on Silius and in several other studies. E.g., see Matier (1989a); Marks (2005b), 529–30; and Dominik's extensive discussion in this volume with further bibliography (443–45).

⁴¹ On Hannibal, see von Albrecht (1964) *passim*; Fucecchi (1990a) and (1990b); Dominik in this volume (443).

as a kind of symbolic Scipio or as a hypostasis of Flavian Stoicism. As Asso observes, however, Hannibal models himself on Hercules as well (perhaps the Semitic God Melqart), just as Rome's leaders venerate the Greco-Roman Hercules. Instead of drawing a sharp distinction between these two 'Herculeses' to account for the contrast between Hannibal and Rome's leaders, Asso proposes a unitary approach that focuses on how we can define Hercules as a composite and complex character in the epic narrative. In his view, Silius draws on both the religious aspects of Hercules/Melqart and the earlier literary and philosophical traditions to explore the contradictory aspects and divine humanity of Hercules and to locate those qualities in Roman identity itself.

Benjamin Tipping offers a different approach to the question of heroism in the *Punica*. Although there may be no single character who qualifies as a 'hero' both in narratological terms (the epic's most visible character) and in a cultural sense (embodying the poem's prevailing values), the *Punica*, nevertheless, poignantly raises questions about heroism, its definition, and its limitations and, in particular, about whether Scipio Africanus Maior satisfies the criteria of a hero or may be said to be, in some sense, the 'true hero' of the poem. A major challenge to such a proposition, of course, is Hannibal's dominant presence, which underpins Silius' poetic response to his epic antecedents, especially the *Aeneid*, and spans a work whose very title prompts the thought that it is about the Carthaginian leader. Yet Hannibal is too transgressively un-Roman to be in any simple sense the poem's hero. As Tipping contends, it is possible then not only to assert the narratological dominance of Hannibal in the *Punica*, but also to demur at the idea of Scipio as the 'ethico-cultural' hero of Silius' epic: "Silius reveals in the *Punica* a pattern of Roman conduct that Alexander's quest for personal power and glory establishes, Virgil's Octavian realizes, and Silius' Domitian surpasses. Scipio Africanus Maior is a pivotal figure in that pattern, providing a model for exemplars of subsequent Roman autocracy" (215). Tipping stresses that this shifting figure of Scipio, who is associated with Herculean gigantomachy and the evils of civil war, is also "suggestive of the Virgilian and post-Virgilian epic hero's lack of definition, of the difficulty of determining what it meant to be epic hero or Roman or both, and of the ancient epic poet's own endlessly emulative practice" (218).

Supplementing these two discussions of Hercules and the question of heroism in the poem, Marco Fucecchi focuses on the role of positive

and negative heroic models in the *Punica*. Silius' choice to treat a crucial and glorious moment from the Roman republican past suggests the ambition of Flavian culture to re-appropriate the exemplary role of the republican tradition of historical epic that begins with Ennius. Of particular note is the moralizing outlook of the poem, which is reflected in Silius' interest in ethical models of heroism. These models are both positive, such as Scipio Africanus, Fabius Maximus, Aemilius Paulus, Claudius Marcellus, and negative, such as Gaius Flaminius and Terentius Varro. As Fucecchi shows, Silius 'marries' the historical facts from sources such as Livy and the Annalists with the stories attested in the biographical and anecdotal tradition of Valerius Maximus. With reference to Fabius and Marcellus in particular, Fucecchi observes both a "completeness" and an interrelated "incompleteness" in the two great generals as models of heroism. The scholar highlights how Fabius' *cunctatio* and Marcellus' tragic death underscore the fact that both men "lack the effectively charismatic stature of the one who is finally destined to triumph over the enemy" (221). In Fucecchi's opinion, this man is a general whose portrait, throughout the narrative, "provides a more complete paradigm of heroism, in a synthesis of human and divine qualities: Scipio Africanus" (221).

In the final article in this section on heroism in the *Punica*, Enrico Ariemma focuses on demagogical figures in the poem and shows how Silius uses them to emphasize the deep internal contradictions that beset the Roman side during the war. Rome faces not only an external enemy, Hannibal, but an enemy nourished in the bosom of its society, leaders such as Flaminius, Minucius, and Varro, who make decisions detrimental to the Roman state. Choosing Varro as his principal example, Ariemma demonstrates how the poet deploys "a net of intratextual correspondences that render Varro as another Flaminius" (242). Silius thus fashions the impetuous general paradoxically as another Hannibal. As Ariemma contends, this aspect of the narrative constitutes an important ideological element in the process of (re)discovering Roman identity, from the defeat at Trasimene in book 5 to the destruction at Cannae in books 9 and 10.

5. *At the crossroads*

Rome's 'internal' struggle not only leads to victory over the 'external' enemy in the war, but also sets the city on a path to becoming an empire, and in this respect Rome's story suggests a connection

between Silius' epic and the Flavian period in which it was conceived and produced. Such progress toward victory and national expansion is facilitated, ironically, by several defeats, most notably at Cannae, in books 9 and 10; for that defeat ultimately leads to the selection of the right man, Scipio, a prototype of those imperial *principes* who would one day take over the helm of the flagging Republic and transform it into an empire.⁴² The *Punica* can hardly be viewed, therefore, as an escapist work of a poet with a nostalgic penchant for the past.⁴³ As Marks has correctly observed, Silius constructs a Virgilian-style teleology, according to which Rome's past is linked to its future as an empire, not only in that the city achieves world supremacy once the Carthaginian 'other' is eliminated, but in that Rome's empire will be ruled by emperors.⁴⁴

Following in the footsteps of Virgilian criticism, the *Punica* has itself been subjected to two opposing schools of thought, the pro-⁴⁵ and the anti-⁴⁶Domitianic line of interpretation; one sees this, in fact, in the contrasting views on heroism in the essays of this volume. Recently, a new course in the interpretation of the political content of the poem has been suggested: the *Punica* offers a more balanced view of the potential benefits of Domitianic rule and the perils of imperial, autocratic power, and it explores those imperial realities through the merits and drawbacks of the republican past.⁴⁷ As has been observed by Marks, the Flavian poet strives for the golden means, "the balance between tradition and innovation that is critical to Rome's survival and success...having lived under no less than twelve emperors and through a year of bloody civil war, he saw Rome reinvent herself many times, yet persevere nonetheless."⁴⁸ It may be time, then, to

⁴² Dominik (2003) 496: "In the *Punica* Rome survives to fight another day, but her geopolitical self-interest, martial fervour, diplomatic belligerence and lack of human compassion allow her to triumph and to maintain her hegemony over her allies and rivals."

⁴³ Marks (2005a) 283.

⁴⁴ Marks (2005b) 535.

⁴⁵ McDermott and Orentzel (1977); Liebeschuetz (1979) 167–791; Mezzanotte (1995).

⁴⁶ Mendell (1924), 100–2; Ahl-Davis-Pomeroy (1986) 2556–58; McGuire (1997).

⁴⁷ Marks (2005a), 283–88 and *passim*; Ripoll (1998a) 526–28. Cf. also Laudizi (1989) 155–58.

⁴⁸ Marks (2005c) 536. See also Marks (2005a) 288: "...he composed the epic precisely in order that it be read with reference to and maybe by Domitian himself. Indeed, it is probably no random coincidence that Silius started his epic right at the beginning of the emperor's reign, began to bring it to a hurried conclusion in 96, the year in which Domitian was assassinated, and left it in a relatively unpolished state,

forsake the bifurcated road of a negative and positive interpretation of the Flavian regime in the *Punica* in favor of one that does justice to the complexities of the poem. This approach is in line with the most recent evaluations of other poetic *corpora* of the Flavian period, such as the *Siluae*. As Newlands has proposed in her study of the “poetics of empire” in Statius’ lyric poems, the *Siluae* can be seen as compositions that defy the categorization among monologic poems of imperial praise: they can be interpreted as “interrogative rather than subversive, monitory rather than simply adulatory.”⁴⁹

The remaining chapters in the third part of the volume aim at promoting such an approach to the poem, by emphasizing important, yet understudied features of the *Punica*, aspects that directly bear on the interpretation of the poem as a whole. In the second subsection of the third part, two essays discuss Silius’ use of ekphrasis. In the first essay, Stephen Harrison examines five Silian ekphraseis from a narratological perspective, stressing the poet’s use of both internal and external analepsis and prolepsis. This study places Silius in a celebrated epic tradition of describing pieces of art. For instance, Hannibal’s shield in book 2 offers analeptic summary of the interaction between Rome and Carthage in that it vividly evokes the *Aeneid* and looks back to the events of the First Punic War, but it is also proleptic insofar as it anticipates a flashback to the previous war later, in *Punica* 6. For Harrison this observation raises important questions about the perspective from which the ekphrasis is viewed: “Does the point of view of the character observing the object in the work’s plot differ from that of the omniscient reader or narrator, and if so does this introduce such features as dramatic irony, where the reader knows more than the character about the plot’s coming development” (280)? By studying the role of ekphrasis in Silius, Harrison observes a “subtle and complex technique” rather than mere repetitions of earlier material.

In her essay, Eleni Manolaraki explores the various permutations of seascape ekphraseis in the *Punica*. The poet provides both mythologized and naturalistic descriptions of bodies of water, fashioning them as agents in the action, as emblematic of the successes and failures of

though he had several more years to live. The *Punica*, in short, was as much an epic for Domitian’s Rome as it was an epic about the Second Punic War. So much so that when Domitian died, it lost its ideal reader, its didactic purpose, and its *raison d’être*.”

⁴⁹ Newlands (2002a) 23.

both the Romans and the Carthaginians, or as similes that inform the main narrative in unexpected ways. Manolaraki offers three examples of how Silius negotiates waterscapes in his narrative: Hannibal's expeditions are framed by his perplexed sighting of waterscapes at Gades (book 3), in Capua (book 12), and off the coast of Italy (book 17). She proposes that "through a complex intratextual and intertextual network, Silius establishes his own authorial persona within the text and illuminates Hannibal's failure in terms of personal responsibility, divine necessity, and historical determinism" (294). Manolaraki shows that "far from being décor of travelography or learned digressions, tides in the *Punica* play a significant role as thematic links between different episodes throughout the epic" (321) and that Silius exploits "the rich historical, philosophical, and naturalistic symbolism of tides to establish a powerful and knowledgeable voice for himself, and then to explain Hannibal's personality and his fortunes in the *Punica* with insight and authority" (321).

In the final essay of this subsection, Robert Cowan examines the *Punica's* sense of literary and historical destiny and suggests that this destiny is strongly determined by its position between the foundational narrative of the *Aeneid* and the dissolution of the *De bello civili*. Because of the *Punica's* status as the epic of the turning-point in Roman history, it invites exploration of alternative paths which history might have taken, and, consequently, "counterfactuals are particularly and perhaps uniquely fundamental to the poem's poetics of contingency" (324). This important contribution for our understanding of the poem's teleological character emphasizes the fact that "counterfactuals, because of their emphasis on contingency and the potential for very small events radically to alter the large-scale course of history, underscore the potential for the impact of a single figure to change the face of history" (340). Similar to Manolaraki's approach, Cowan observes that Hannibal becomes "not only a reader but a lover in his desire to comprehend and possess the object of his gaze" (351), namely, Rome. However, just as erotic desire is, almost by definition, impossible to fulfill, and Hannibal's conquest of Rome is endlessly frustrated, so his attempt as a reader to understand Rome is relegated to the level of a counterfactual. "Not only are Hannibal and the reader denied the opportunity to gain the ultimate object of their desire, to read, understand, and distinguish between the real and counterfactual Romes, but that opportunity itself becomes yet another case of what might have been" (351).

In the last two subsections on themes and images, two scholars turn to issues of gender and socio-politics. First, Alison Keith examines the role of gender and women in Silius and the influence of the historical epic tradition starting with Ennius' *Annales*. Keith scrutinizes the co-implication of the discourses of sexism and orientalism, as Silius deforms masculinity through the application of a feminizing orientalist rhetoric. By emphasizing the eastern origins of Dido and her Carthaginians, Keith demonstrates, "Silius assimilates the historical figure of Hannibal to the plane of classical (Virgilian) myth and marks him from the start as the feminized loser in a renewed struggle between Phoenician East and Roman West" (362). In addition, as Keith perceptively points out, the poet complements "a pervasive feminization by association of Hannibal and the Carthaginians with the androcentrism of Roman women, in his repeated emphasis on their commitment to the masculine goals of Rome's senatorial leadership" (372). We could say that "the heroism of the masculine Roman west constitutes a perfectly balanced counterweight to the fatal eastern effeminacy of the Carthaginian foe in the Orientalist and sexist plot of Silius' epic" (373).

Finally, Neil Bernstein focuses on the relationship between the poem and Flavian society. As he maintains, the *Punica* stands in contrast to the other Flavian epics in its emphasis on family solidarity. Silius' representations of family respond both to prior literary tradition and to changing attitudes toward family in his contemporary society. This chapter examines the interrelation between the performance of military commanders as fathers-sons-leaders, the contrasting perspectives of family members on the role and purpose of the family, and the rhetorical use of kinship language in interstate diplomacy. As Bernstein shows, Silius' epic uses the paradigm of descent in order to question the ability of political myths to establish or maintain unity among the diverse communities that people an empire. The epic's representation of the connection between descent, paternal authority, and monarchical power also responds to the kinship discourse of the Flavian regime. With this essay, we return to the question of the relevance of the poem in its context, which Bernstein answers by demonstrating how artwork, architecture, coinage, and literature emphasize Domitian's *pietas* toward his divine relatives, figure him as the symbolic father of the Roman state, and encourage him to perpetuate the Flavian dynasty. Likewise, in the *Punica*, Scipio's successful balance of public and familial obligations reflect particular aspects of Domitian's self-presentation.

6. *Reception*

The last part of the volume consists of an exploration of Silius' *Nachleben* both in the Renaissance and in modern critical literature. Francis Muecke's essay concentrates on Domizio Calderini's (1446–1478) lecture notes on Silius (an unpublished work which she has been editing). A lecturer such as Calderini aimed to help his students understand the text that he was expounding, but had ulterior aims as well, and his notes, therefore, contain much that now seems irrelevant. In addition to corrections and paraphrases of Silius' text, Calderini's commentary consists of a) short explicatory notes and b) longer notes based on ancient sources, often composed from two or more sources, in which he notes differences between these sources and sometimes designates a preferred version. Muecke offers an informative overview of several of Calderini's notes on various passages in the poem and thereby explains his "methodological terminology," by scrutinizing the phrases that show where his interests lie.

Finally, William Dominik's chapter outlines the main trends in modern scholarship on Silius Italicus' *Punica*, with particular emphasis on the shifts in critical attitudes toward the poet in the twentieth century. Silius Italicus has arguably received a more negative press than any other imperial epicist, but, as Dominik shows, reception of the poet has been steadily changing, especially over the past ten years. We hope that this collection shall further the study and appreciation of the *Punica*, undoubtedly one of the most significant epics of imperial Rome.

B. The *Punica*: Context and Intertext

CHAPTER TWO

TO SILIUS THROUGH LIVY AND HIS PREDECESSORS

Arthur Pomeroy*

The clash between Rome and Carthage, and their allies, commonly known as the Second Punic War, initially drew into the conflict the entire western Mediterranean, and then, after the entry of Philip V into the war in 216 BC and Rome's subsequent formation of an anti-Macedonian alliance, came to involve much of the rest of the *oikoumenê* as well. It could well be considered, in the somewhat limited vision of its participants, to be the very first *world* war. It was thus no accident that when Polybius began writing his new universal history in the 160s BC, he chose to commence his account at the eve of the hostilities, in 220. The length and destructiveness of the fighting had already encouraged a number of accounts of the conflict. Contemporary prose writers associated with each camp narrated events according to their own aims and biases. The Greek Silenus, who accompanied Hannibal on his campaigns, is one such source.¹ On the Roman side, Fabius Pictor, a member of a renowned patrician family, included the war in his account of Rome's growth from its foundation,² and L. Cincius Alimentus, who had been captured by the Carthaginians and perhaps had the opportunity to speak to Hannibal himself, produced his own annalistic history.³ Many versions followed. Polybius, while detained in

* I would like to thank especially Florian Schaffner and the Latin Faculty of the University of Innsbruck, whose invitation to present a paper at the conference "*Ordior arma*. . . Gegenwart und Zukunft der Silius Italicus-Forschung" at Innsbruck in 2008 greatly assisted me in bringing together my thoughts on this subject; and also the other fortunate participants at that splendid event for kind remarks and suggestions. In addition, Bruce Gibson has offered numerous suggestions for improvement as well as inspiring further research into the historical tradition by allowing me to read an earlier draft of his paper for this volume.

¹ Silenus: *FGrH* 175 T 2 (= *Nep. Han.* 13.3) on Silenus and Sosylus living in camp with Hannibal.

² Fabius Pictor: *HRRel* 1:5–39 (= *AR* 1:16–54); Fabius Pictor on the Hannibalic War: *Plb.* 3.8.1–8 (Hannibal and Saguntum); *Liv.* 22.7.1–4 (casualties at Trasimene).

³ Cincius Alimentus: *HRRel* 1:40–43 (= *AR* 1:54–59); his capture and meeting with Hannibal: *Liv.* 21.38.3–5.

Latium as an Achaean hostage, saw the war as indicative of Rome's inevitable rise to world power. Slightly later Coelius Antipater's seven-book monograph on the war marked a noticeable improvement in historical narrative (and probably romantic expansion) from a Roman point of view.⁴ During the first century BC others treated this period, most notably Valerius Antias who is often cited by Livy, but their works can only be dimly perceived as reflected in accounts from the imperial era, such as Appian's *Hannibalic*, *Punic*, and *Spanish Wars*; Plutarch's Lives of *Fabius* and *Marcellus*; or Zonaras' epitome of Cassius Dio. The Second Punic War also featured in poetic texts soon after its conclusion, most notably in Ennius' *Scipio* and his *Annales* (books 7–9). In addition, participants in the war became favorite exemplars for the Romans as indicated in Cicero's prose, Valerius Maximus' collection of *Memorable Words and Deeds*, or even Juvenal's sarcastic comments on Hannibal as bogeyman and subject for debates.⁵

How much of this material Silius ever read is an open subject for debate. Some histories were probably rapidly superseded. For instance, the "barbershop gossip" that characterized the work of Sosylus of Lacedaemon and Chaereas according to Polybius (3.20.5) suggests a lack of careful research and possibly fanciful treatments by these writers that later historians probably discounted.⁶ For over a century and a half now scholars have periodically compared Livy (books 21–30) and the fragmentary account by Polybius with the other (abbreviated) sources that survive, particularly Appian and Zonaras, in order to reconstruct an "annalistic tradition" to oppose the Polybian narrative in Livy. Yet this search for lost sources for the Hannibalic War in Silius' *Punica* has still not come to any firm conclusions. To expound on and assess the various passages that provide test cases would require

⁴ Coelius Antipater: *HRRel* 1:158–77 (= *AR* 2:50–70); Coelius' quality of writing: Cic. *Leg.* 1.6; *de Orat.* 2.54.

⁵ Juv. 10.147–67, especially: *i, demens, et saevas curre per Alpes/ut pueris placeas et declamatio fias* ("Go on, you madman, rush over the savage Alps, so you can become a fine tale for children and a topic for debates," 10.166–67). Advice to Hannibal on appropriate strategy after Cannae is seen as a regular topic of declamation (in Juv. 7.160–64), while in *Satire* 6, he is the threat that reveals the stern resolve of Roman women of old (Juv. 6.166–71; 287–91).

⁶ Sosylus *FGrH* 176 F 1 (= *Wurzburg Pap.* 1), a detailed description of a naval battle involving Massiliots, Romans, and Carthaginians, possibly the one at the mouth of the Ebro in 217 BC, may suggest that Polybius is being hypercritical. The probable pro-Carthaginian stance of Sosylus, who accompanied Hannibal and even gave him instruction in Greek literature (Nep. *Han.* 13.3), is a more likely cause of disapproval.

a lengthy study, but I hope that a brief survey of the literature on this topic will indicate why the problem is so intractable.

In 1877, Heynacher began the systematic mining of Silius Italicus' poem in an attempt to recover alternative accounts of events in the Second Punic War. Comparison of Silius with Livy should theoretically recover unknown sources, an approach that was still being used by Nicol as late as 1936, when he produced what is still the only work in English on this topic.⁷ Yet already in 1933 Klotz had called into question many earlier attempts to retrieve variant accounts: as he noted, abbreviation and the demands of the epic genre also needed to be taken into account. In 1972, Paola Venini produced two important articles that showed that chronological divergences from Livy could usually be explained by compositional requirements in the *Punica* and that Silius regularly expanded Livian battle scenes in line with the descriptions in Homeric and Virgilian epic.⁸ Nesselrath's 1986 study indicated that almost all material in Silius that varies from Livy's account can be explained by authorial choice; this approach obviates the need to posit alternative sources and has generally brought such investigations to an end.⁹

While the topic of Silius' sources is hardly exhausted, it seems to me that progress can only be made if due attention is paid to both prose (not only historical, but also non-historical writers)¹⁰ and poetic models (including Homer and Virgil, but also noting the influence of Horace, Ovid, and Lucan among others).¹¹ In particular, it should not

⁷ In addition to Heynacher (1877), Nicol draws on the work of Schlichteisen (1881), Bauer (1883), and van Veen (1884).

⁸ Venini (1972a) and (1972b).

⁹ Nesselrath (1986) responds to Klotz (1933) and Nicol (1936), as well as Burck (1984a and b). Particularly interesting is Nesselrath's suggestion (1986) 206 n. 14 that Silius' choice of names for the Roman speakers in the senatorial debate on aiding Saguntum (other accounts leave them anonymous) may be the source for the same names in Zonaras/Dio. If there is contamination of the historical tradition through Silius—or perhaps more likely, from the declamatory tradition, which can be glimpsed through Juvenal, influencing both Silius and the historians of the early empire—the likelihood of ever unravelling the tangle of accounts is very small.

Lucarini (2004) has recently revived the question of non-Livian annalistic sources. Each of the examples he has raised needs to be examined carefully; however, the lack of attention in this study to poetic topoi and Silian invention is surprising, given the amount of recent literature in this area. Cf. Spaltenstein (2006).

¹⁰ See the essays in this volume by Fucecchi (on Plutarch, 219–39) and Manolaraki (on the philosophical tradition, 293–321).

¹¹ See the essays in this volume by Klaassen (on Homer and Virgil, 99–126), Ganiban and Harrison (on Virgil, 73–98 and 279–92), Marks and Cowan (on Lucan, 127–53 and 323–51).

be assumed that epitomized accounts of the Hannibalic War that post-date the *Punica* offer an accurate guide to a single historical narrative (sometimes optimistically described as “the annalistic tradition”), since it is clear that even among contemporaries of the Second Punic War there were multiple descriptions of events. If in fact these traditions had coalesced into one generally accepted version, that text could only be Livy’s history, whose prestige clearly surpassed that of other writers on this period. But given the survival of a multiplicity of sources deep into the imperial period, searching for their traces in Silius is particularly fraught. In terms of research methodology, the discovery of a correspondence between any passage in the *Punica* and one in another source may be little more than coincidence. To exclude random possibilities it is essential that a series of such correspondences be established. For instance, it is true that the omen of the sacred chickens refusing to eat before the battle of Trasimene exists only in Silius (*Pun.* 5.59–62) and Cicero (*Divin.* 1.77) and that Cicero is likely to be taking his account from Coelius Antipater.¹² But Silius also adds an omen of the bull being unwilling to be sacrificed (*Pun.* 5.63–65),¹³ transforms the Ciceronian version that the standards could not be uplifted into a vivid description of the ground, in which they were fixed, oozing blood as a warning of the disaster ahead (*Pun.* 5.66–69), and adds in a scene of fiery lightning over the lake (*Pun.* 5.70–76). Furthermore, the differences between Appian’s account of events preceding the battle (*Hann.* 38–40, where Flaminius lacks military experience and actually arrives by a forced night march) and that of Silius (who acknowledges Flaminius’ bravery and previous success against the Gauls, *Pun.* 5.107) make it unlikely that correspondences between Silius and Appian suggest a common source in either Coelius or Valerius Antias.¹⁴ As Spaltenstein

¹² Lucarini (2004) 113–14.

¹³ Possibly transferred from the omen of the sacrificial calf escaping soon after Flaminius enters office, with which Livy ends book 21 (21.63.13–14), but also drawing on Virgil (*Aen.* 2.223–24)—a well-known passage, as Bruce Gibson points out to me, inasmuch as may be inferred from Juvenal’s comparison of Priam to “a poor old ox” (*vetulus bos*, Juv. 10.268).

¹⁴ Lucarini (2004) 114 prefers Valerius Antias because of the presence of a certain Valerius Corvinus as warning figure in Silius (5.76–100). However, because of the role of Hannibal’s Gallic allies in the battle, the presence of a Corvinus may well be an apposite Silian invention. Lucarini’s suggestion that Appian’s and Silius’ accounts are linked by the theme of reckless haste (*Pun.* 5.29: *ruebat*—actually of Flaminius’ cavalry; App. *Hann.* 38: οὐ διαναπαύων), fails to take into account the frequency of this theme in the *Punica* until the battle at Cannae; cf. Marks (2005b).

observes,¹⁵ it is more probable that Silius remembered the passage about the chickens in Cicero, a favorite author,¹⁶ rather than drew from a rather obscure source and included it with other typical omens and epic embellishments from Homer and Virgil.

Silius Italicus was, of course, a well-read man: Pliny's description of his multiple libraries and notable literary soirées paint a portrait of a highly educated member of the senatorial elite.¹⁷ If anything, the choice of works available to him makes the identification of authors who might have suggested thematic variations in any individual case, almost impossible. But above all else, we should remember that he was not writing a versified history, but rather a martial epic in the style of the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, and Lucan's *De bello ciuili*, incorporating digressive material as he saw fit.

Nevertheless it would also be wrong to overlook Silius' deliberate recall of one particular historical source: Livy's account of the Second Punic War in his third decade. Given Livy's status as a model of Roman historical prose, it would be surprising if Silius, whose classical tastes were well known while he lived, were not to draw on his history.¹⁸ The Flavian poet may have completely rearranged the historical emphasis by devoting the majority of his epic to the early years of the war (the account of the battle of Cannae is not complete until after ten of the seventeen books of the *Punica*, while Livy reaches the same point, three years into the seventeen-year war, after two of his ten books devoted to the subject). Yet this change of scale can readily be explained by Silius' conception of Cannae as the ultimate testing of the mettle of the Roman people. The poet constructs his epic as a roller-coaster ride around this battle,¹⁹ whereas Livy maintains the

¹⁵ Spaltenstein (1986) 340.

¹⁶ Cf. Ripoll (2000b).

¹⁷ Pomeroy (1989).

¹⁸ Silius' contemporary Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.1.101–2) lists Sallust and Livy as the Roman equivalents of Thucydides and Herodotus; Martial *Ep.* 7.63 links Cicero and Virgil together as models for Silius (cf. Vessey [1974a]). Nicol, who is often cited for his suggestions of non-Livian material in Silius, devotes a substantial part of his study to clear Livian parallels ([1936] 96–123).

¹⁹ Cf. Jupiter's speech to Venus (*Pun.* 3.571–629): *iamque tibi ueniet tempus, quo maxima rerum/nobilior sit Roma malis* ("You will see a time that will make Rome, though capital of the world, even more famous through its sufferings," 3.584–85); and the description of the Romans maintaining their customary morale even in the wake of Cannae (10.657–58).

Polybius, who inserted his famous description of the Roman constitution in book 6 as part of a digression on the special qualities that enabled Rome to survive Cannae,

tension between Roman defeats and successes (for instance, the victories of the Scipios in Spain that conclude book 23 offset the disasters in Italy in book 22) almost to the end of his account of the war. Substantial abridgment of the Livian narrative likewise indicates Silius' epic emphasis on the exploits of a small group of individual characters rather than attempt to imitate Livy's comprehensive narration.²⁰ All the same, it can be seen that at significant points, Silius deliberately recalls Livy's work, reminding his readers of the significance of the prose, as well as the poetic tradition, in creating Rome's collective memory. I hope to demonstrate that it is reasonable to assume that Silius picked up certain storylines from Livy or sources used by the historian²¹—what I will call a “Thucydidean narrative”—as well as adapting certain Livian passages for his use in other parts of the poem. Some marked differences in historical causation are also important, I believe, as indicative of the changed intellectual milieu between late republican and Flavian Rome.

The obvious starting point is Livy's preface to book 21:

In parte operis mei licet mihi praefari, quod in principio summae totius professi plerique sunt rerum scriptores, bellum maxime omnium memorabile quae unquam gesta sint me scripturum, quod Hannibale duce Carthaginenses cum populo Romano gessere. nam neque ualidiores opibus ullae inter se ciuitates gentesque contulerunt arma neque his ipsis tantum unquam uirium aut roboris fuit; et haud ignotas belli artes inter sese sed expertas primo Punico conferebant bello, et adeo uaria fortuna belli ancepsque Mars fuit ut propius periculum fuerint qui uicerunt. odiis etiam prope maioribus certarunt quam uiribus, Romanis indignantibus quod uictoribus uicti ultro inferrent arma, Poenis quod superbe auareque crederent imperitatum uictis esse. (Liv. 21.1.1–3)

In this section of my work, I would like to preface my narrative by stating something that most historians declare at the beginning of their entire account: I will be writing about a war that is the most memorable

may have popularized the idea of Roman composure in the face of disaster as proof of inherent nobility of spirit. But in his narrative structure, since Zama concludes the war in book 15, ten books after the description of Cannae, he is closer to Livy than to Silius.

²⁰ This is particularly true of the last books of the *Punica*, where emphasis is placed on Scipio's unstoppable success (cf. Marks [2005a])—in the light of Scipio's unbroken victories, there is no need for more descriptions of valiant, but futile *aristeiai* that show Roman fortitude in the earlier part of the epic.

²¹ See Oakley (1997–2005) 4:148 n. 1 for a critique of the theory that the late Republican historian Tubero is the source of Thucydidean material in Livy.

of all that have ever been fought—that is, the one which the Carthaginians under the command of Hannibal fought with the Roman people. For no states or peoples have ever had greater resources when they clashed under arms, nor had they themselves ever had so much strength in manpower. They employed military tactics that were well known to each side, having already experienced them in the First Punic War. Furthermore, the fortune of war was so changeable and the fighting so much on a knife's-edge that those who turned out victorious came the closest to total defeat. In fact they battled it out with a hatred that was almost greater than their abilities, since the Romans could not stand the thought of the conquered bearing arms of their own accord once more against their conquerors, while the Carthaginians believed that the terms imposed on them when defeated showed both arrogance and greed.²²

Livy recalls Thucydides' assertion in his history of the Peloponnesian War that his subject matter was the most memorable war of all time.²³ In Livy's case, his claim is defended on the following grounds: the participants were at the peak of their resources and had already taken the measure of each other in the First Punic War (the 'economic' argument); the war displayed the ebb and flow of Fortune, since the victor had come close to total defeat (the 'narrative tension' argument); and the two sides displayed absolute hatred for one another (the 'fight to the death' argument). While Thucydides dismissed the significance of the Trojan War in comparison with the conflict between the Athenians and Spartans,²⁴ Livy is likely to be making his claim to be narrating the most memorable of all wars in deliberate contrast with accounts of Alexander's campaign against the Persians or possibly the battles between the Diadochi. It is a claim for the primacy of Roman history that fits well with his subject matter (the growth of Rome to absolute world power)²⁵ and occurs elsewhere in his work (e.g., Liv. 9.17–19 with

²² Translations are my own.

²³ Thuc. 1.1.1–2, describing the Peloponnesian war as “the most remarkable in comparison with those that had occurred previously” (ἄξιολογώτατον τῶν προγεγενημένων) and that the Athenians and Spartans were “at their peak in every type of resource” (ἄκμάζοντες... παρασκευῇ τῇ πάσῃ).

²⁴ Thuc. 1.9–11.

²⁵ Presumably Livy does not mention the spread of the conflict throughout the Mediterranean (which would echo Thucydides' claim [1.1.2] that his war not only affected the Greeks and some part of the barbarian world, but in fact most of mankind) in order to focus on the deadly enmity between the two key nations.

its evaluation of Alexander's chances of success, had he embarked on an Italian campaign).²⁶

A comparison with Silius' preface is instructive:

Ordior arma, quibus caelo se gloria tollit
 Aeneadum patiturque ferox Oenotria iura
 Carthago. da, Musa, decus memorare laborum
 antiquae Hesperiae, quantosque ad bella creavit
 et quot Roma uiros, sacri cum perfida pacti
 gens Cadmea super regno certamina mouit
 quaesitumque diu, qua tandem poneret arce
 terrarum Fortuna caput. ter Marte sinistro
 iuratumque Ioui foedus conuentaue patrum
 Sidonii fregere duces, atque impius ensis
 ter placitam suasit temerando rumpere pacem.
 sed medio finem bello excidiumque uicissim
 molitae gentes, propiusque fuere periculo
 quis superare datum: reserauit Dardanus arces
 ductor Agenoreas, obsessa Palatia uallo
 Poenorum ac muris defendit Roma salutem. (*Pun.* 1.1–16)

I am preparing to display the battles through which the fame of the descendants of Aeneas rose into the heavens and cruel Carthage had to endure the terms set by the Romans. Permit me, Muse, to recall the glorious efforts of ancient Italy and the greatness and number of the heroes that Rome produced for these wars, after the race of Cadmus, breaking its oath to honor the sacred agreement, renewed the struggle for supremacy: for a long time it was unclear on which citadel Fortune would set up the capital of the world. Three times with unfavorable outcome the Sidonian generals shredded the treaty sworn to Jupiter and their agreements with the senate, and three times the unholy sword persuaded them to violate and shatter the commonly agreed peace terms. But by turns the two peoples attempted to end the central war by complete destruction of the other, and the side that was permitted to prevail came closest to the ultimate peril: the Trojan leader opened the gates to Carthage's citadel, yet the Palatine had been besieged by a rampart of Carthaginians, and Rome had to protect its safety by its walls.

As von Albrecht shows in his study of the *Punica*, Silius is clearly treating Livy as an intertext here along with the introduction to Virgil's

²⁶ For the irony of Livy, a Roman, borrowing the topos of polemic against one's historical predecessors from Greek historiography and applying it against Greek writers, rather than his native tradition, see Marincola (1997) 224. On the Alexander digression in general: Oakley (1997–2005) 3:184–206, with comments on Livian irony at 189. On counterfactual history in Silius, see Cowan in this volume (323–51).

Aeneid.²⁷ The importance of the war is indicated by the parade of battles to come (1.1–2);²⁸ the extent of the warfare is indirectly marked by the need for the Muse’s assistance in recalling Italy’s toils and Rome’s numerous heroes (1.4–5); and the close-run nature of the war is emphasized by what is almost a quotation from Livy about the suspense over the outcome (*propiusque fuere periclo, / quis superare datum*, *Pun.* 1.13–14 ~ *anceps Mars fuit ut propius periculum fuerint qui uicerunt*, *Liv.* 21.1.2). However, while Livy explains the intractability of the two sides in both political and emotional terms by describing Roman anger at the continuing resistance of the Carthaginians and Punic hostility to the arrogance and greed of the victors (21.1.3),²⁹ Silius offers a negative ethical verdict on Carthaginian perjury (1.9–10) and perpetual hatred of Rome: *tantarum causas irarum odiumque perenni / seruatum studio et mandata nepotibus arma* (“[It is my right to reveal] the reasons for such immense anger, the hatred preserved through continuing fervor, and the way they entrusted the fighting to their descendants,” *Pun.* 1.17–18). In both authors, this Thucydidean psychological ‘deep cause’ manifests itself next in the oath against Rome that Hannibal undertakes: to begin hostilities with the Romans as soon as possible (*Livy* 21.1.4) and bring about the fulfillment of Dido’s curse (*Pun.* 1.70–139, especially 114–15: *Romanos terra atque undis, ubi competet aetas, / ferro ignique sequar*

²⁷ Cf. von Albrecht (1964) 15–24. For a more detailed discussion of the Virgilian correspondences, see Küppers (1986) 45–60.

²⁸ *Ordior* appears to start as a technical term from weaving, for creating the warp (*OLD* s.v. *ordior*) and then to develop the sense of “to embark, begin, start.” Cf. *Prop.* 3.9 where the poet first offers to sing of the Titanomachy (*Iouis arma canam*, 3.9.47), then will set out (*ordiar*, 3.9.50) scenes of cattle grazing on the Palatine, the foundation of Rome and the wolf suckling Romulus and Remus (3.9.49–51), before moving on to modern times and Augustus’ triumphs.

The metaphor of comparing one’s narrative to a frieze or similar continuous artistic depiction is common in Roman historiography (e.g., *Liv. Praef.* 10: “depictions of every type of conduct set out in a noble memorial [or ‘splendid history’] for you to gaze upon” [*omnis te exempli documenta in illustri posita monumento intueri*]). For detailed discussions of Livy’s *monumenta*, see Jaeger (1997) 15–29, suggesting a path of memory through a historical landscape; and Feldherr (1998) 1–50 on Livy’s treatment of his text as a visual image.

²⁹ The famous Virgilian tag *memento... parcere subiectis et debellare superbos* (“remember to spare the conquered and to defeat utterly the proud,” *Aen.* 6.851–53) is echoed in Roman anger that Carthage has not accepted its hegemony, but Livy also imagines the Carthaginians turning Roman standards of morality back on the victors when they accuse their opponents of arrogance.

Rhoeteaque fata reuoluam (“I will pursue the Romans by land and sea when my age permits and renew [lit. ‘rewind’] the fate of Troy”).³⁰

In both texts there are character sketches of Hannibal (*Pun.* 1.56–69 and Liv. 21.4.3–9) underlining his remarkable abilities, as well as his purported vices of cruelty and treachery.³¹ What is perhaps insufficiently appreciated is that the actual *casus belli* is also described in Thucydidean terms: if the attack on Plataea by the Thebans in 431 BC commenced the Peloponnesian War, so too Hannibal’s attack on Saguntum can be seen as the beginning of the Second Punic War.³² This is less obvious in Livy’s account, which involves two embassies, one to Saguntum and Carthage after the beginning of hostilities, the other to Carthage demanding the renunciation of Hannibal’s actions. Silius, however, combines both events to suggest greater decisiveness on the Roman side: an attack on Saguntum is an attack on Rome and, in the absence of reparations, must result in war.³³

As already noted, the Thucydidean comparison with the Trojan War is absent in Livy’s introduction to the Second Punic War and likewise does not feature at the beginning of Silius’ account. But Homer is evoked later, when Silius calls on Calliope to assist him in the catalogue of the Carthaginians and their allies (*Pun.* 3.222–405): no fiercer storm had ever raged, “nor did the [i.e. Trojan] war, so dreadful with its wreck of a thousand ships, roar more hideously and terrify the quivering world” (*nec bellum ruptis tam dirum mille carinis/acrius infremuit trepidumque exterruit orbem*, *Pun.* 3.229–30). Thucydides’ rejection of the paramount status of the conflict between the Greeks and Trojans has paradoxically both failed (since Silius is still measuring his narrative and epic against Homer) and simultaneously succeeded in setting the bar against which all future wars should be measured.

³⁰ On the oath scene, see the essays in this volume by Ganiban (74–83), Harrison (280–82), and Keith (362–64).

³¹ Polybius denies the cruelty (that was the work of another man with the same name) but claims to have good Carthaginian sources for Hannibal’s avarice (Plb. 9.22–26).

³² So Dominik (2003) 469–97.

³³ The debate around the Roman embassies is considerable: Klotz (1933) 12–13; Schwarte (1983) 13–31; Nesselrath (1986) 205–10 (against Schwarte’s suggestion that Silius’ single embassy is more likely historically, while Livy’s two embassies are merely a standard doublet); Lucarini (2004) 107–10 (preferring to see Silian use of a non-Livian source rather than coincidental resemblances arising from the adaptation of Livy).

Traces of Thucydides can also be seen elsewhere.³⁴ In 7.260–71, Silius recounts a tale, already present in Livy (22.23.4–8), namely that Hannibal deliberately left Fabius' Falernian farm untouched in order to create resentment at Rome among those whose property had been plundered and burnt. This was a stratagem that Pericles had perceived might be employed by Archidamus during the Peloponnesian invasion of Attica, in order to discredit him and his policy of refusing battle to the Spartan army (Thuc. 2.13).³⁵ While in Thucydides Pericles donates his land to the state before the Peloponnesian troops arrive in Attica, and Livy has Fabius immediately send his son to Rome to sell the property when he realizes Hannibal's ruse, Silius' Fabius does not allow himself to be distracted by such matters from his pursuit of the Carthaginian army until he traps his enemy and settles down to starve him out (*Pun.* 7.272–81). The change is readily understandable: Silius' hero is untroubled about his reputation, a man who is concerned with deeds, not words.³⁶

There are other plausible Thucydidean parallels for the narrative of the Punic War.³⁷ Some, like the description of the plague, had become such commonplaces that direct influence is less likely.³⁸ It is possible that the theme of Athens taking a defensive stand behind its walls through the Peloponnesian War also has some influence on the frequently used motif of the capital under siege in Livy, which in turn,

³⁴ For Silius' engagement with Thucydides' ethnography of Sicily (Thuc. 6.1–5), see Gibson's chapter in this collection (56–67).

³⁵ Note that Silius does not mention an additional concern for Fabius: in the ransoming of prisoners, he had incurred a considerable debt for the Roman treasury that he made up for out of his own account (Livy 22.23.5–8). Not only is this a much less romantic tale, but runs contrary to the portrait elsewhere of Roman disdain for those soldiers who had allowed themselves to be captured.

³⁶ The tale of Hannibal leaving Fabius' farm untouched also appears in Valerius Maximus (7.3.ext.8) but with a different message: Fabius' sense of duty (*pietas*) and Hannibal's sly and deceitful character (*Hannibal's uafri mores*) were too well-known to trick the Romans. Contrast this with Fabius' neo-Stoic indifference to reputation in Silius.

³⁷ Walsh (1961) 68 suggests that Flaminius is the Livian equivalent of Thucydides' Cleon and that Fabius plays Pericles to Minucius' Cleon (105). These are, however, seen as marks of a "tragic" concept of history—a theory of Hellenistic historiography that has since come under considerable attack.

³⁸ While the description of the plague that befalls the Roman troops at Syracuse is ultimately Thucydidean in origin (*Pun.* 14.580–617; cf. Thuc. 2.47–53 and Liv. 25.26.7–15), Thucydides' disaster scenario had already long been accepted into the Latin epic tradition (Lucr. 6.1138–286; Virg. *G.* 3.478–566; Ov. *Met.* 7.523–613). See further, Woodman (1988) 32–40.

as von Albrecht has demonstrated, becomes prominent in Silius. The senatorial debate between Fabius and Scipio in Livy 28 shows a direct awareness of the Athenian debates between Nicias and Alcibiades in Thucydides (6.9–18), since Fabius makes reference to the Sicilian expedition in 28.41.17. The older statesman briefly mentions the impossibility of summoning Scipio from Africa, if Hannibal were to make a sudden march on Rome, unlike Fulvius' hasty return from Capua in 211 BC (28.41.15).³⁹ Such an event is also posited in Silius (*Pun.* 16.621–27), but the theme of “Hannibal at the Gates” is made much more prominent: “will that hideous plague not pounce on the walls to which he has become accustomed and advance on Jupiter, who was been left deserted without our youth and without our weapons” (*non dira illa lues notis iam moenibus urbis/adsiliet uacuumque Iouem sine pube, sine armis/inuadet, Pun.* 16.622–24); “when Rome is taken you will regret your improvident decisions” (*capta damnabis consulta improvida Roma, Pun.* 16.640); “[Even if Hannibal does return to Africa] I am sure that he will be just the same—the same as when you saw his rampart from the city walls” (*nempe idem erit Hannibal, idem,/cuius tu uallum uidisti e moenibus urbis, Pun.* 16.642–43). This last argument is a notable intertext, since it strikingly reflects Fabius' ‘imprisonment’ in the past.⁴⁰ In Livy, it forms part of Scipio's peroration: “Let a Roman camp threaten the gates of Carthage in preference to our seeing once more the enemy's rampart from our walls” (*castra Romana potius Carthaginis portis immineant quam nos iterum uallum hostium ex moenibus nostris uideamus, 28.44.15*). Very clearly, in the *Punica* Scipio turns Fabius' arguments back on him: if Hannibal as a mere stripling could threaten Rome (“the Sidonian boy only just at the onset of youth could come to face the peoples of Laurentum and the Trojan walls” [*Sidoniusne puer uix pubescente iuuenta/Laurentes potuit populos et Troia adire/moenia, Pun.* 16.677–79]), surely Scipio now, battle-hardened from the Spanish campaigns, can return the favor (“let

³⁹ Nicol (1936) 102–3 lists some of the following parallels between Silius and Livy without comment on their significance.

⁴⁰ Stübler (1941) 113–17 discusses the use of Nicias as a model for Fabius (cf. Thuc. 5.16.1, 6.11.6, and 6.23.3, where a reliance on Fortune is firmly rejected) and Cleon as the model for Minucius (cf. Thuc. 3.82.4). In the debate between Fabius and Scipio, however, Scipio is not simply an Alcibiades, the plaything of Fortune (that is a role now assumed by Hannibal), but (following Polybius' description) he acts in accord with his own intelligence (Stübler [1941] 152–62). A comparison of the two speeches in detail and consideration of the differences between the Athenian expedition to Sicily and Scipio's invasion of Africa is offered by Rodgers (1986).

Carthage, which has grown accustomed to being feared, at long last feel fear itself” [*timeat tandem Carthago timeri/adsueta*, *Pun.* 16.684–85]]. Is Rome to view the marks of Hannibal’s handiwork on its walls, while Carthage need not fear or shut its gates (“or will Rome view the shameful marks of the Carthaginian’s right hand on its walls, but at the same time Carthage free from care hear about our toils and wage war while its gates are left open?” [*an Roma uidebit/turpia Agenoreae muris uestigia dextrae*,⁴¹ */Carthago immunis nostros securo labores/audiet interea et portis bellabit apertis?* *Pun.* 16.691–94]]? Hannibal’s threats to burn Rome and throw Jupiter from the Tarpeian rock (a scene that he imagines will be portrayed in Carthage as an answer to the depiction of the First Punic War at Liternum, *Pun.* 6.712–13) are to be answered by the crackling of flames in the temples of Carthage (“surely then our reckless enemy is welcome to strike again at our towers with his Carthaginian rams, if he fails to hear the sound of his nation’s temples crackling in the Roman flames” [*tum uero pulset nostras iterum improbus hostis/ariete Sidonio turres, si templa suorum/non ante audierit Rutulis crepitantia flammis*, *Pun.* 16.695–97]). Thucydides and Livy structure their debates around arguments about the dangers of incurring additional risks when there are threats closer to home, caution and enterprise also illustrating the difference between the older and younger generations. In Silius these themes remain, but each speaker adds to the emotional appeal by emphasizing the pathos of the fate of captured cities.

The conclusion to the debate in Silius is a resounding victory for Scipio’s strategy: *talibus accensi patres fatoque uocante/consulis annuerunt dictis* (“the senators, aroused by such utterances and the call of Destiny, gave their approval to the consul’s words,” *Pun.* 16.698–99), quite at odds with Livy’s account of senatorial disapproval because of the belief that if they did not support Scipio, he would take the allocation of provinces to the people instead (28.45). The simplest explanation is that epic focuses conflict on the major characters and that lesser men, such as Thersites, are quickly put in their place (cf. *Il.* 2.243–77). But this also means that the tension between aristocrats and populace, seen in Thucydides, for instance, in Pericles’ attempts to control the assembly or Cleon’s playing to the crowd, and recalled

⁴¹ Presumably referring to Hannibal’s hammering with his spear on the gates of Rome (“and now with spear leveled he beats on the barred gates” [*clausas nunc cuspidē pulsat/infesta portas*, *Pun.* 12.565–66]).

by Livy in his description of Flaminius' conflict with the senate that led him to assume his consulship outside Rome (Liv. 21.63.2)⁴² and Varro's success in achieving power beyond his social status, is generally absent from Silius. While Raymond Marks is right to insist that class conflict is not entirely missing from the *Punica*,⁴³ it is certainly altered. There is no equivalent scene of the departure of the consuls of 216 from Rome, a small senatorial retinue around Paulus, a grand mob for Varro ("they say that Paulus set out with the leaders of the senate accompanying him; the plebeian consul was accompanied by his plebeian supporters, a rabble made even more conspicuous by the absence of any order of rank"⁴⁴ [*profectum Paulum tradunt prosequentibus primoribus patrum: plebeium consulem sua plebes prosecuta, turba conspectior cum dignitates deessent*, Liv. 22.40.4]). On the whole Silius lacks the 'class conflict' which Thucydides uses to explain *στάσεις* throughout the Aegean and which is echoed in Livy's belief that the best people sided with Rome, the mob with Carthage ("a single plague, as it were, attacked all the states of Italy; the result was that the populace disagreed with their betters, the senators supporting the Romans, while the plebs pushed their states toward the Carthaginians" [*unus uelut morbus inuaserat omnes Italiae ciuitates ut plebes ab optimatibus dissentirent, senatus Romanis faueret, plebs ad Poenas rem traheret*, Liv. 24.2.8]).⁴⁵

That traces of Thucydides should appear in Silius' text should not be surprising. Dionysius of Halicarnassus under Augustus had felt it worthwhile to publish a detailed study of the Greek historian, reaching the conclusion that Thucydides' narrative generally offered an excel-

⁴² In Silius, Flaminius' downfall is (as with almost all Roman generals until Fabius) more due to impetuosity than to a disregard for proper conduct—his success against the Gauls in 221 BC is underlined when Ducarius, who leads the final attack on the consul, is described as a *Boian* ally of Hannibal (*Pun.* 5.644–58), a member of the Gallic ethnic group that Flaminius had defeated, whereas Livy attributes his death to Ducarius, an Insubrian tribesman (22.6.2–4). Silius has probably borrowed this irony from Lucan, who has a Cimbrian sent to execute Marius (2.75–85; *Plu. Max.* 39 notes a less apposite version involving a Gallic assassin).

⁴³ Marks (2005a) 279, especially n. 115.

⁴⁴ I take the phrase *dignitates deessent* not to mean that there was nobody of any standing accompanying Varro, but rather that his procession was a shambles (*turba*) rather than a retinue of supporters duly organized by rank.

⁴⁵ Although these schematic treatments were exploited for their explanatory power by de Ste. Croix (1972) 36–42 and (1981) 519–20, several articles since have generally shown that the behavior of each city must be treated on a separate basis and that it is difficult to generalize widely on the basis of class.

lent model for imitation (*Th.* 55).⁴⁶ While Quintilian categorized the linguistic styles of the two great Roman historians of the late republic and Augustan age by comparison of Sallust to Thucydides and Livy to Herodotus (*Inst.* 10.1.101–2), closer examination shows that each was capable of using the alternate Greek model for historiographic purposes.⁴⁷ Seneca the Elder's report of Livy's criticism of Sallust for ruining a Thucydidean *bon mot* (*Con.* 9.1.13–14) may be inaccurate—the actual author imitated is in fact Pseudo-Demosthenes (ps.-Dem. πρὸς τὴν ἐπιστολὴν 11.13)—but indicates a vigorous Augustan debate over the correct use of the Greek historian.⁴⁸ The incorporation of Thucydidean allusions in Silius reflects these literary debates, directly through Livy or indirectly through other writers, like Polybius, whose debt to Thucydides can be readily detected in passages such as his discussion of direct and indirect causes of conflict.⁴⁹

However, the recognition of allusions to earlier writers as in the depiction of the debate between Scipio and Fabius should not divert us from one feature that is revealed by close comparison of Silius and Livy. It is likely that Livy included internal dissension in his narration of earlier times to mirror the confusion of the late republic. The very reduction of the amount of such material in the *Punica* is significant. Raymond Marks has suggested that it shows Scipio's ability to unite aristocracy and people.⁵⁰ Perhaps there is another explanation. As is well known, Tacitus perceived a decline in Roman historiography that occurred along with the rise of the Principate. Before hatred and flattery had put the last touches to the distortion of the truth, ignorance of the workings of Roman government had done its damage (*Tac. Hist.* 1.1.1). This passage is generally regarded as an attack on partisan history, written to win the approval of the reigning emperor and to

⁴⁶ See Pritchett's (1975) commentary for Dionysius' theory of the appropriate use of classical models.

⁴⁷ On Sallust, see Grethlein (2006) who indicates a strong Herodotean element in the historian's narrative method; for Thucydides and Sallust, see the sources cited in Grethlein's bibliography, particularly Scanlon (1980).

⁴⁸ See Vardi (1996) 500–502, especially n. 36; Vardi (n. 35) also draws attention to Demetrius' *synkrisis* of Homer's and Thucydides' use of περίρρητος (*Eloc.* 112–14), in itself indicative of epic elements in the historiographical tradition that parallel the historiographical elements in epic writers, such as Silius.

⁴⁹ Plb. 3.31–32 and Walbank (1957–79) 1:359.

⁵⁰ A suggestion that was not lost on interwar Italians, as the film *Scipio l'Africano* (dir. Carmine Gallone, 1937), with its modeling of Scipio on *Il Duce*, demonstrates.

settle scores with those of the past. But increasing emphasis on leading figures also meant that ethical, rather than political themes came to the fore. In Seneca's *Ep.* 86, Scipio's dank bathhouse at Liternum offers an entry point into a discussion of old-fashioned restraint (in Stoic fashion, self-control in day-to-day activities leads to appropriate political decisions as well: in Scipio's case choosing self-sacrifice over civil strife). Valerius Maximus (2.10.2) takes Scipio as an exemplar of *maiestas*, individual greatness even when deprived of the badges of office. First he narrates the story of Antiochus returning Scipio's captured son as a mark of respect. But then comes a remarkable anecdote: a number of pirate captains (*complures praedonum duces*) just happen to arrive at Liternum to visit the great man, who rightly takes alarm at this delegation and prepares to defend his house and home. When informed that they only want to gaze upon him, he unbolts the doors, and they, after first paying homage as if at the doors of a temple, enter, take and kiss his hand, and having laid presents at the threshold, return home (*ad lares*—sometimes emended to “ships” [*ad naues*]), happy men. I do not wish to suggest that Silius is ever as fabulizing as Valerius Maximus,⁵¹ but I believe that all these imperial portraits share a common feature. With the removal of the popular element from the Roman governmental system (or perhaps better, its incorporation as clients of the emperor) and the change from a competitive to cooperative role for the senatorial class, history was likely to become increasingly dominated by ethical evaluation of the behavior of the ‘best.’ The emphasis on *fides* and *pietas* in the *Punica* is not accidental.⁵² Rather than see Silius' work as an attempt to ensure his status in high society, a literary advertisement for his cultural attainments (that is an

⁵¹ In fact, Silius keeps close to the historical tradition, varying only when invention is suggested by epic style (for instance, in the *nekyia* of book 13, based on Homeric and Virgilian models); cf. Tipping in this volume (203–11). There is no sign of borrowing material produced by declamatory fabrication. By contrast, Plutarch (*Cic.* 48) accepts the tale that Popillius, one of the murderers of Cicero, had previously been defended by the orator on a charge of parricide. Given that there is no other record of this trial, it seems likely that this is a fiction, created on the basis of another historical event (Cicero's defence of Roscius), with the intention of portraying both an ungrateful client and an unethical patron.

⁵² Note that in the *Histories* Tacitus not only places a similar emphasis on *fides*, but with his description of the capture and decapitation of Fabius Valens (*Hist.* 3.62–63) appears to recall deliberately the significance of the defeat of Hasdrubal at the Metaurus: with Valens' death the Vitellians, like Hannibal and his Punic army in Italy, can no longer hope for reinforcements but only await their fate (Pomeroy [2006] 178 n. 21).

undeniable truism that also applies to Pliny's own self-fashioning in his *Epistles*), it may be helpful to treat it as an education in proper values for the new generation of senators of the Flavian era. The appeal to the Roman past can thus be considered both "reactionary" (to use Clarence Mendell's phrase from 1924, almost a century ago) and oddly innovative. Silius both parades his debt to Livy and highlights the Thucydidean aspects of the historian (either having perceived these from his own reading of Thucydides or from reading authors who had been influenced by Thucydides).⁵³ As Matthew Fox has shown in his 2007 study of Cicero's philosophical work, *historia* at Rome need not be seen as a continuous narrative. It may be useful in future to apply similar criteria to the writers of the early empire.

I would like to conclude with a Silian use of Livy that has not, I think, been fully appreciated. Silius begins his work with an account of the siege of Saguntum that takes up much of the first two books of his epic. In the end, when the Saguntines are nearly overcome by constant attacks and lack of supplies, Hercules is able to persuade *Fides* to return one last time to earth and inspire the inhabitants of the city to endure beyond any expectation (*Pun.* 2.457–525). Enraged by this intervention, Juno retaliates by sending down Tisiphone in the guise of the Saguntine woman, Tiburna, who persuades the populace to build a massive pyre in the center of the city and join her in a mass suicide (2.526–695).⁵⁴ There is no parallel in Livy: faced with peace terms that would result in their utter ruin, the Saguntine leaders prefer to throw their goods into a hastily built bonfire. Some immolate themselves as well, but the city is in the meantime stormed by the Carthaginians who obtain immense plunder, including large numbers of Saguntine prisoners (21.14–15.2). In Livy, it is clear that there are limits to *Fides* and the Saguntines would have been glad to receive reasonable peace terms from Hannibal (cf. 21.12.3–13.9).

⁵³ Walbank (1957–79) 1:15 notes that the description of the emotional response of the populace of Lilybaeum watching the Carthaginian attempt to break the naval blockade ultimately draws on Thucydides' description of the battle of the Great Harbor at Syracuse (Thuc. 7.71). Whether Polybius is here directly influenced by Thucydides or is echoing a Thucydidean treatment in a source cannot be ascertained—a caveat that must apply throughout this discussion.

⁵⁴ On this episode, see Vessey (1974b) and most recently Asso (2003), Augoustakis (2010), and Bernstein in this volume (390–95). The immediate poetic model is the maddening of Amata by Allecto in *Aeneid* 7, but various other parallels can be detected (Vessey [1974b] n. 30; Spaltenstein (1986) 158).

Lucarini has suggested that there is a closer parallel to Silius' account in Valerius Maximus (6.6.ext.1).⁵⁵ Yet apart from attributing the behavior of the Saguntine council to the entire populace and adding the motivation that the Saguntine people did not wish to break their alliance (*ne a societate desisterent*), Valerius' account is very similar to Livy's (a bonfire and self-immolation: *communi rogo semet ipsi superiecerunt*). Valerius, like Silius, introduces a personified *Fides*, but unlike the poet, he does not make her part of the action: "I am inclined to think that at that moment *Fides* herself, as she looked down on mankind's affairs, would have assumed a mournful expression, as she saw the most enduring worship of herself condemned by Fortune's judgment to such a bitter end" (*crediderim tunc ipsam Fidem, humana negotia speculantem, maestum gessisse uultum, perseuerantissimum sui cultum iniquae fortunae iudicio tam acerbo exitu damnatum cernentem*, V. Max. 6.6 ext.1).

As Nicol notes,⁵⁶ Appian and Diodorus appear to offer closer parallels to Silius. Appian has the women of Saguntum, after a *teichoscopia* where they observe the deaths of their husbands in battle, throw themselves from the roofs or hang themselves after cutting the throats of their children (*Hisp.* 12). A similar description of a desperate sally by the menfolk, ending with the women of the city killing their children and hanging themselves, occurs in a fragment of Diodorus (25.15). Yet these seem to be no more than typical descriptions of mass suicide after defeat.⁵⁷ Livy's description of the behavior of Vibius Virrius at Capua is actually more similar to Silius' description of events at Saguntum. There Virrius advises his fellow countrymen to abandon any hope of Roman mercy and to join him in consuming poison and in sharing a common funeral pyre (26.13–14.5). Perhaps more notable still is the fate of Astapa, a Spanish town whose treacherous attacks on Roman supply trains had guaranteed its destruction. The able-bodied males perish to a man resisting the Roman attack, and armed men left behind slaughter all the women and children before joining them in one great funeral pyre: "so Astapa was destroyed by fire and the sword without leaving any booty for the soldiers" (*ita Astapa sine praeda militum ferro ignique absumpta est*, 28.23.5). It would seem highly probable that Silius has drawn on two classic examples of perfidy and *impietas* (*Fides*

⁵⁵ Lucarini (2004) 111.

⁵⁶ Nicol (1936) 24–25.

⁵⁷ Cf. the behavior of the Cimbric women after Marius' victory (Plu. *Mar.* 27.2).

looks down on the well-deserved fate of Capua, and an Erinys serves at Virrius' last banquet, *Pun.* 13.277–98) and, by a process of transference and reversal that can be seen elsewhere, created his Saguntine *exemplum*.⁵⁸ Livy, it appears, has provided more than simply a historical narrative for the poet to imitate.

⁵⁸ For Silius' reversal of Virgilian themes from *Aeneid* 8, see Pomeroy (2000).

CHAPTER THREE

SILIUS ITALICUS: A CONSULAR HISTORIAN?

Bruce Gibson*

1. *Introduction*

In the introduction to the first volume of his commentary on Silius Italicus, François Spaltenstein voices, amongst other concerns, his frustration with those scholars who have approached Silius' work as if it were some kind of historical source for the Second Punic War between Rome and Carthage. A series of memorable and trenchant *aperçus* are used to reject any such possibility, as the example below illustrates:

Pour parler net, Silius est tout sauf un historien, car il n'en a pas les intentions, et cela même si sa matière est historique. C'est là que se sont trompés trop de critiques, qui n'ont pas distingué entre la matière brute du texte et l'intention de l'auteur.¹

It is understandable for Spaltenstein to have expressed irritation at those who treat Silius as if he were an ancient historian, but what perhaps needs some modification here is the conception not of the epic poet, but of the historian. It would be unfair to blame Spaltenstein for having published the first part of his commentary before A. J. Woodman's *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography* (1988), which has had a fairly dramatic effect on the way in which ancient historiography is studied. Viewed from a perspective which sees ancient historical texts as something rather different from the work of modern academic historians, however, Silius and ancient historiography may not in fact be so far removed from each other after all.² Hence the slightly paradoxical title

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¹ Spaltenstein (1986) xiii.

² Note, for instance, Quintilian's well-known description of *historia* as a *carmen solutum* ("prose poem," *Inst.* 10.1.31); for a classic modern discussion of ancient poetry and historiography, see Wiseman (1979) 143–53, 170–71. Indeed Spaltenstein (2006)

of this essay, where the phrase “consular historian,” so often used of a figure like Silius’ contemporary, Cornelius Tacitus,³ is a preliminary to asking the question: to what extent might the work of Silius, the longest survivor from the consuls of Nero’s reign (Plin. *Ep.* 3.7.9–11),⁴ evoke and draw on the practices of historiography? In terms of contents, after a brief consideration of his approaches to his main source, Livy, this paper will address Silius not so much from the point of view of *Quellenforschung*, but from the perspective of Silius’ adoption of historiographical motifs and techniques, to show how Silius can exploit the modes of historiographical presentation in an epic poem. This study will move on to the issues of grandeur and scale, before examining in depth Silius’ digression on Sicily at the start of book 14. The final topic to be covered, briefly, will be Silius’ approach to speeches. I hope to show how the techniques of historiography are a fundamental part of Silius’ work: as well as seeing him in poetic terms, in terms of the self-affiliation with Virgil (and hence with poetry), as famously described in Pliny’s letter (*Ep.* 3.7.8), readers of Silius should be open to his exploitation of historiographical predecessors and indeed other prose authors as well.⁵

2. *Silius and his sources: Some observations on method*

On the question of the source texts used by Silius, the work of Nicol and other scholars is fundamental, demonstrating how similarities with Livy (and other texts) permit one to say that Silius has carefully

appears implicitly to recognize this difference, and moreover emphasizes the role of *topoi* in historical writing; note too his explanation (718) that it is wrong to look for historical evidence in Silius “...parce que Silius ne s’intéressait pas à l’histoire, du moins pas à l’histoire comme les historiens modernes la conçoivent.”

³ The phrase is associated with Ronald Syme; e.g., Syme (1951) 196, (1956) 17, and (1958) 760: “It is also fanciful to discard a consular historian in favour of ephemeral arrangements, dutifully commemorated on tablets of bronze by the loyal zeal of small towns.” The phrase has been used by later scholars in relation to other historians as well: see e.g., Levick (1976) 292 n. 54 (of Servilianus Nonianus), Swan (2004) 59 (of Dio Cassius).

⁴ There were 17th-century editions of the poem whose titles referred to *Silii Italici uiri consularis*: see von Albrecht (1964) 217. Note too the *Dissertatio de Silio Italico poeta consulari* of C. Cellarius (Halle 1694).

⁵ Cf. Gibson (2005) for an examination of the fusion of poetic and historiographical concerns in Silius’ treatment of Hannibal’s visit to Gades (*Pun.* 3.1–60), as well as Manolaraki’s essay in this volume on seascapes (293–321).

engaged with historical sources—and here we can usefully be reminded of Pliny's own praise for Silius' great learning (*doctissimis sermonibus dies transigebat*, "he passed his days in most learned discussions," *Ep.* 3.7.4).⁶ Though the association of *doctrina* with poetry is a commonplace, we should not forget that such poetically deployed *doctrina* might in part be derived from prose texts as well as verse.⁷ A simple example can illustrate how Silius can on occasion take over what might seem a very minor detail from Livy. At *Pun.* 15.591–611, Silius notes how, prior to the battle of the Metaurus in 207 BC, C. Claudius Nero enters the camp of Livius Salinator under cover of darkness but is in any case detected by Hasdrubal, who decides that the best policy is to avoid battle. This short sequence of events (reported in Liv. 27.46–47) is a good place to see how Silius exploits Livy's account. In Livy, Hasdrubal is able to detect the arrival of the second army because of the appearance of old shields among the enemy, unnoticed before, and the leanness of the horses (Liv. 27.47.1). Silius gives a similar explanation but at the same time shows his ability to move in a different direction, with some subtle alterations, such as the reference to the effects of the march on the men, as well as the horses:

pulueris in clipeis uestigia uisa mouebant
 et, properi signum accursus, sonipesque uirique
 substricti corpus. (*Pun.* 15.603–5)

⁶ Nicol (1936) argues throughout for the possibility of Silius making use of an "annalistic source" in addition to Livy on occasion; cf. von Albrecht (1964) 15, 72–74 and (1991) 1181–82; Nesselrath (1986); Roosjen (1996) 4–6; Bona (1998) 16–17; Lucarini (2004) (though see Spaltenstein [2006], in response to Lucarini); and Pomeroy in this volume (27–45). The tendency in the scholarly literature to suppose that Greek historiographical sources such as Timaeus were only indirectly transmitted to Silius is perhaps over-cautious: if Statius' father taught Greek poets as obscure as Sophron and Corinna (*Silu.* 5.3.158), there is no reason to suppose that Greek historians, especially those concerned with the western Mediterranean, were not available. Nicol (1936) 146 and n. 5 does, however, recognize the influence of Timaeus in Rome, even if he is cautious about the possibility of direct influence on Silius (contrast the slightly more positive discussion on 145 with 138 and 147); compare the suggestion that Posidonius' influence is likely to have been indirect (147, 154: cf. the slightly more positive tone on 149). In summing up Silius' geographical sources, Nicol (1936) 168 is willing to concede the possibility of a "close relationship" with Greek sources but then suggests that it is unlikely that Silius consulted all possible sources, "and an authority must be suggested whose work could be regarded as having brought the information derived from them under Silius's notice" (168–69). For the possibility of links between Ennius' *Annales* and Silius, see Bettini (1979) 143–71, Matier (1991). Casali (2006), Manuwald (2007) 74–82, and Dorfbauer (2008) offer an insightful treatment of Ennius' appearance as a character in *Pun.* 12.387–419.

⁷ For Silius as a *doctus poeta*, see Pomeroy (1989).

Traces of dust that were seen on the shields made an impression on him, and evidence of a hasty march, the steeds and men who were lean in body.⁸

Before this moment, however, Silius gives us a detail which is not found in this passage of Livy, namely that M. Livius Salinator, Nero's colleague in the consulship for 207 BC, was previously falsely condemned by the Roman people (for actions relating to his conduct during the Second Illyrian War of 219 BC). This is a detail which Livy uses elsewhere in his work, most notably a little earlier at 27.34, where he tells how Livius had kept away from Rome after his condemnation, and, even after his return to the city, had played little part in affairs. Because he is not tied in the same way as Livy to accounts of the elections for every year, Silius diverges from the historian by referring to the past injustice suffered by Livius Salinator, not at the moment of his election as consul for the second time, but when Salinator is about to play a leading role in the battle. Strikingly, Livius' prior history is in fact mentioned twice in this episode, since in the battle of the Metaurus itself, Silius presents a brief moment where Cato comments with regret on the fact that Livius was not available to fight against Hannibal earlier on in the war (*Pun.* 15.730–34), a detail absent from Livy.⁹

This clustering of details around Livius Salinator and the battle of the Metaurus shows the choices available to Silius in responding to the earlier work of Livy. These options can sometimes include, for example, emphases different from those found in the historian. Thus, at *Pun.* 4.704–10, Silius introduces C. Flaminius, consul for the second time in 217 BC.¹⁰ Livy and Silius do, it is true, share an interest in the idea of the assumption of this consulship as something of a disaster. Livy underlines Flaminius' desire to become consul at Ariminum, because of previous quarrels with the senate, and the anger of the senate at Flaminius' inappropriate refusal to enter the consulship with due ritual (21.63). For Silius, however, the first day of the consulship is also the occasion for a simile of a useless helmsman whose incompe-

⁸ Translations are my own.

⁹ On Livius Salinator in Silius, see Burck (1984a) 88–90, and Marks (2005a) 49–50, who argues that he represents a wider “rejuvenation” in Rome.

¹⁰ On Flaminius in Silius, see e.g. Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2519–23. Luca-rini (2004) 112–14 argues for the importance of Coelius Antipater in Silius' treatment of the consul in book 4.

tence leads his ship to disaster (*Pun.* 4.713–17); as Marks and various scholars before him have noted, this simile is an echo of Polybius,¹¹ who at 3.81.11 uses the simile of a ship which has lost its helmsman falling into the hands of the enemy.¹² Silius, however, evokes a different past for Flaminius, and, strikingly, one not directly evident in the Livian passage.¹³ In the *Punica*, Flaminius is most notable for an overly easy victory against the Boii, a Celtic people, who do not match up to the opponent he is about to face in Hannibal (*Pun.* 4.704–10). For Silius' comment on this previous victory, we can compare Polybius' report of Flaminius' victory over the Insubres in 223 BC (Plb. 2.33). The Greek historian is extremely careful to draw out the blundering of the Roman general even in this battle, a carelessness whose effects were only averted by the excellence of the military tribunes (Plb. 2.33.1 and 7–9). Flaminius' lack of military expertise occurs elsewhere in Polybius (3.80.3), and the historian censures him as a demagogue (2.21.8–9; 3.80.3). Silius' treatment of Flaminius in the run-up to Trasimene makes more of his past than Livy does in the same context.¹⁴

3. *Scale and grandeur*

Let us now consider how Silius' method draws in more abstract terms on historiographical practice. One area concerns Silius' sense of the scale of his work. As is well known, Silius begins the *Punica* with an

¹¹ For Silius and Polybius, see e.g., the nuanced but ultimately cautious discussion of Nicol (1936) 23, 32, 33–34, 35–36, 38, 49, 52–53, 111, 124. More recent scholarship has shown a similar tendency in assessments of the possible influence of Polybius on Silius (see e.g., Nesselrath [1986] 226–27). Here too, I would suggest that ruling out the possibility of influence (whose results need not be confined to the realms of *Quellenforschung*) can be over-reductive: the contrast with modern intertextual studies of Greek poetic influences on Latin poetry is perhaps instructive.

¹² See Nicol (1936) 35 and Marks (2005a) 18 and n. 12 for this point and further bibliography. The simile also recalls other *epic* similes of helmsmen of vessels in storms (see also von Albrecht [1964] 110–11), and it is also worth noting that Silius does change the context of the simile from Polybius, who refers to the capture of a ship in a military situation, whereas Silius speaks of the ship running aground.

¹³ Though Livy does allude to the earlier campaign at the moment when Flaminius is killed at Trasimene by the Insubrian Ducarius (Liv. 22.6.3–4); Silius too has a speech from Ducarius but leaves it unclear who has actually killed Flaminius (*Pun.* 5.644–59). In Polybius, note the brief mention of Flaminius' death at the hands of certain Celts, at 3.84.6.

¹⁴ Note that book 20 of Livy's history, which covered Flaminius' tribunate and his first consulship, is lost. The *Periocha* refers to the activities of Flaminius' censorship of 220 BC but does not account for his other magistracies.

indication of the magnitude of his work, evoking Livy's similar opening of book 21:¹⁵ at *Pun.* 1.12–16, Silius singles out the Second Punic War from the First and Third on the grounds that this conflict was by far the most dangerous between the two states. This is a clear reference to Livy (21.1.2), where the historian comments that the war was such that the victors, the Romans, came closest to disaster.¹⁶ This should not obscure, however, Silius' complex engagement with the opening of Livy 21. An essential part of this process, I suggest, is the establishment of the *Punica's* grandeur. In part this is couched in terms of traditional epic concepts: the opening line of the poem refers to the *gloria* of the Aeneadae being raised to heaven, calling to mind the traditional idea of epic κλέος (cf. *Od.* 9.20); similar is the appeal to the Muse at *Pun.* 1.3. At the same time, Silius is interested in situating his work within the tropes and gestures of historiographical writing. Thus at *Pun.* 1.7–8 we hear of the long contest as to which power would rule the world:¹⁷

quaesitumque diu, qua tandem poneret arce
 terrarum Fortuna caput. (*Pun.* 1. 7–8)

And for a long time it remained uncertain in which citadel Fortuna would finally set in place rulership over the earth.

This idea of a contest over world rule is absent from Livy's preface to book 21,¹⁸ but it is found in Polybius' preface: the Greek historian notes that he and his audience had some familiarity with the two states competing for universal dominion (τὰ πολιτεύματα τὰ περὶ τῆς τῶν ὅλων ἀρχῆς ἀμφισβητήσαντα, *Plb.* 1.3.7). Thus we see that Silius' preface intersects not only with Livy, but also with Polybius, an indication of the poet's complex attitude to historical methods and approaches.¹⁹

¹⁵ On Silius' use of the opening of Livy 21, see von Albrecht (1964) 19–20, Pomeroy (1989) 124–25 and his essay in this volume (27–45). Feeney (1982) 3 rightly emphasizes the historiographical features of the *exordium*.

¹⁶ See e.g., Feeney (1982) 20 on *Pun.* 1.13–14; Marks (2005a) 69 and n. 21, with further bibliography.

¹⁷ Spaltenstein (1986) 3 compares *Lucr.* 3.833–36 and *Liv.* 30.32.2 for this idea. See also Feeney (1982) 14.

¹⁸ *Pace* von Albrecht (1964) 19 and Marks (2005a) 69 n. 21, who see these lines as echoing the different point made by *Liv.* 21.1.2.

¹⁹ See e.g., Thomas (1986) 188–89 for the technique of “window reference,” where reference to “the intermediate model thus serves as a sort of window onto the ultimate source” (188).

Another passage on the importance of the war as a whole comes at *Pun.* 3.222–30, where Silius begins his catalogue of the forces on the Carthaginian side. The poet invokes the Muse Calliope and draws on a long tradition of epic catalogues. But this poetic device is also combined with a trope characteristic of historiography, as a means for amplifying the importance of Silius' work.²⁰ One expects a catalogue to reflect on poetic difficulty, the impossibility of narration. After all, the invocation of the Muses in *Iliad* 2 is predicated on the difficulty of producing a list of all the contingents who fought at Troy (*Il.* 2.484–93). When Silius summons Calliope, however, there is no talk of a struggle: the Muse is asked to produce the names. Silius' method of rounding off the catalogue is striking:²¹

non ulla nec umquam
saeuior it trucibus tempestas acta procellis,
nec bellum raptis tam dirum mille carinis
acrius infremuit trepidumque exterruit orbem. (*Pun.* 3. 227–30)

There was not any storm, not ever, that came on more savage, driven on by wild hurricanes; and not more violently did the war that was so dreadful, as it swept away a thousand ships, roar and terrify the shaking world.

On one level, this can be seen as a process of epic competition between Silius and Homer.²² There is, however, another dimension which needs to be brought out here. Silius' comparison with the Trojan War is a historiographical gambit, recalling Thucydides' argument that the Trojan war could not be regarded as comparable to contemporary conflicts (*Thuc.* 1.10.3): the historian thus reinforces his opening claim that the Peloponnesian war was the greatest war which had ever taken place (*Thuc.* 1.1.2).²³ This becomes a move imitated elsewhere in ancient historiography. Consider, for instance, the greatness of the First Punic War: πόλεμος ὃν ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν ἀκοῇ μαθόντες

²⁰ Cf. Martin and Woodman (1989) 96 on the use of catalogues and surveys in historiography.

²¹ On this passage, see also Pomeroy in this volume (36).

²² Scipio's encounter with the shade of Homer in the underworld (*Pun.* 13.778–97) could reflect Silius' self-positioning in relation to the Greek poet. See e.g., von Albrecht (1964) 151–52, Reitz (1982) 115–17, Hardie (1993a) 115, Ripoll (2000b) 162, Marks (2005a) 145, Manuwald (2007) 82–90.

²³ For such superlative expressions, see e.g., Woodman (1983) 171 on *Vell.* 2.71.1; Martin and Woodman (1989) 251 on *Tac. Ann.* 4.69.3. For discussion of the theme of greatness as a topos of historical proems, see Herkommer (1968) 164–71.

πολυχρονιώτατος καὶ συνεχέστατος καὶ μέγιστος (“the longest, most continuous, and greatest of the wars we know from the report of history,” Plb. 1.63.4);²⁴ Polybius repeats the Thucydidean move of dismissing earlier conflicts as less impressive, by criticizing not only the naval battles of the era of the Diadochi (1.63.7), but also the naval warfare of the Greeks and the Persians and of the Athenians and the Spartans, at a stroke indicating how his own writing surpasses that of Herodotus and Thucydides.²⁵ Livy would take up this issue at the start of book 21, arguing that the *Second* Punic War is the greatest war which has ever taken place, and thus decisively countering Polybius.²⁶ Silius’ contribution in this area is first to revisit the topic at the start of his epic, with an explicit declaration that the Second War surpassed the First (which could evoke Polybius’ differing view), and then to remind us of the historiographical precedents, when in book 3 the invocation of Calliope recalls not only the *Iliad*, but also Thucydides’ rejection of such epic traditions about the Trojan War.²⁷ It is not simply a matter of following Livy. Silius uses Livy but also Polybius to generate a complex engagement through historiography with epic traditions: the encounter with Homer in the invocation in book 3 thus becomes an encounter with historiography as well.

There is a further aspect to Silius’ fusing of epic and historiographical methodologies to be noted here. As we have seen, when calling upon the Muse for inspiration, Silius does not refer to the traditional difficulty of such a task. It is not the case, however, that Silius has no interest in such matters. Thus, at *Pun.* 4.525–28, Silius comments that even if the glory of the Maeonian tongue were to return to him, and Apollo permitted him to pour forth one hundred voices, he would not be able to narrate the heroic deeds of the commanders of both armies at the Trebia. Though this seems in the first instance reflective of the

²⁴ Cf. also Plb. 1.13.11–13 for the idea that no war was as long. Walbank (1957–79) 1:64 suggests that Diodorus’ remarks on the length of the war (23.15.4) may reflect Philinus’.

²⁵ As noted by Walbank (1957–79) 1:129.

²⁶ For Livy and Thucydides, see e.g., Rodgers (1986), especially 336 and n. 6 on Livy. 21.1; Oakley (1997–2005) 2:293–302 (on the speech of the Campanians at Liv. 7.30); and Pomeroy in this volume (27–45).

²⁷ For the importance of Thucydidean motifs in Silius, see Pomeroy in this volume (27–45); note too Dominik (2003) 470–71 for the parallelism between the fates of Saguntum and Thucydides’ Plataea.

difficulty faced by epic poets in narrating events,²⁸ not completely dissimilar parallels can also be found in historiography as well. Consider for instance the following passage, where Livy indicates his inability to tell of the consternation in Rome at the moment when it was thought that both consuls had perished at Cannae:²⁹

itaque succumbam oneri neque adgrediar narrare quae edisserando minora uero faciam. (Liv. 22.54.8)

And so I will give in to the burden and will not attempt to narrate things which, by talking about them, I will make smaller than they really were.

One might also compare the way in which Livy's fourth decade opens with a comment on the vastness and difficulty of continuing his narrative after having reached the end of the Second Punic War (Liv. 31.1.5). Such claims, whether found in epic or historiography, have the effect of emphasizing the magnitude of the task undertaken. I turn now to another important place for these issues, the invocation to the Muses at the opening of book 14 of the *Punica*.

At the start of book 14, Silius asks the Muses to cover a whole range of possible locations for warfare:³⁰

Flectite nunc uestros, Heliconis numina, cantus
Ortygiae pelagus Siculique ad litoris urbes.
muneris hic uestri labor est, modo Daunia regna
Aeneadum, modo Sicanios accedere portus,
aut Macetum lustrare domos et Achaica rura
aut uaga Sardoo uestigia tingere fluctu
uel Tyriae quondam regnata mapalia genti
extremumue diem et terrarum inuisere metas.
sic poscit sparsis Mauors agitatus in oris.
ergo age, qua litui, qua ducunt bella, sequamur. (*Pun.* 14.1–10)

Turn your songs now, deities of Helicon, to the sea of Ortygia and the cities of the Sicilian shore. This is a task for your skill, at times to approach the Daunian realms of the sons of Aeneas, at other times to come near the Sicanian ports, or to progress through the abodes of the Macedonians and the Achaean countryside or to dip your wandering footsteps in the sea of Sardinia, or to see the huts formerly ruled by the

²⁸ For discussion of this passage, see further Niemann (1975) 83–84. On the hundred tongues motif, see e.g., Hinds (1998) 34–47.

²⁹ For this “inexpressibility topos” in historiography, see e.g., Curt. 4.16.10, Woodman (1983) 150 on Vell. 2.67.1 (with further references on 286).

³⁰ On this proem to book 14, see Küppers (1986) 19 n. 81.

Tyrian race, or the endmost point of the daylight and the margins of the earth. So does Mars demand as he is stirred up in scattered lands. Then come, let us follow where the trumpets, where the wars lead.

On one level, this passage could be compared with the section in the *Iliad* (12.175–76), where the poet indicates the difficulty of writing about war taking place in various locations around the city of Troy.³¹ The invocation of the Muses here might thus be seen as no more than a piece of poetic ‘furniture’.³² The poet, however, draws attention here to the way in which his poem has to embrace a whole series of locations: Sicily, Apulia, Macedonia and Greece, Sardinia, and north Africa, and, in line 8, the ends of the earth. Here, Silius in effect shows his ability to cover a wide range of ground in his work, something which again suggests a possible alignment with historiographical practice. Compare, for example, the way in which Polybius speaks of historical events coming together in his work (Plb. 1.3.4). Even more strikingly, the historian elsewhere emphasizes the achievement of the Romans in campaigning simultaneously in Italy, Spain, and Sicily, while concurrently monitoring the activities of Philip V of Macedon (Plb. 8.1.4–8): Polybius then makes the point that histories of separate regions have to give way to a more universal kind of history in order to understand the historical processes involved (Plb. 8.2.5–6).³³ Of course it is not the case that Silius adopts Polybius’ method of narrating in sequence across the known world; nevertheless, at the same time, Silius’ awareness of geographical location may be felt to suggest a historian’s concerns.

4. *Silius on Sicily* (14.11–78)

Immediately after summoning the Muses, Silius provides a classic feature of historiographical texts, with an ethnographic and geographical

³¹ The authenticity of these lines has been questioned, and indeed the A Scholion on *Il.* 12.176 goes so far as to call the poet’s statement of inability γελοῖον (“laughable”).

³² One can also note that the difficulty of historical narration is a topos in its own right in ancient historiography; see further Herkommer (1968) 171–74 for discussion and examples.

³³ On the idea of the συμπλοκή in Polybius, see e.g., Walbank (1972) 68–71. Diod. Sic. 20.43.7 provides a famous exposition of the difficulties involved in narrating simultaneous events.

digression on the island of Sicily.³⁴ One obvious parallel here is the opening of Thucydides' sixth book on the early history of Sicily,³⁵ especially as Silius is about to narrate a war against Syracuse, a conflict which will lead to Roman success, in contrast with the defeat of the Athenians in the Peloponnesian War.³⁶ Nevertheless, Silius' engagement with Thucydides in book 14 is not straightforward.³⁷ Instead, the poet's account shows a complex fusion of poetic and historiographical concerns. Sicily and its cities are a *poetic* subject in the second book of Callimachus' *Aetia* (fr. 43 Pfeiffer) and in the first book of Lucretius with regard to Empedocles (Lucr. 1.716–33). Moreover, the tradition of ethnographic descriptions is extremely important in Latin poetry.³⁸ However, in Silius, ethnography is an area where we might be especially conscious of the crossover between poetic practice and historiography. Silius' ethnography does not merely follow earlier poetry, but also, since the text is concerned with a historical subject, reminds us of the tradition of ethnographic writing in historiography. Note after all how Tacitus singles out the *situs gentium* ("the locations of peoples," *Ann.* 4.33.3) as something by which some readers might be entertained.³⁹

Silius begins his account of Sicily in *Pun.* 14.11–19 with a description of how the island came to be separate from the mainland.⁴⁰ And though such traditions are attested in poetry (Virg. *Aen.* 3.414–19),⁴¹ the concept is not solely poetic and recalls the way in which prose texts address the origin of Sicily as an island. Thus both Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* 3.86)

³⁴ For brief discussion of the sources used by Silius in book 14, see Nicol (1936) 117–18; Roosjen (1996) 39–40, who suggests that Livy and perhaps Valerius Antias are the key sources (for Valerius Antias and Silius more generally, see e.g., Nicol [1936] 53–54, 119, 122–23); and Lucarini (2004) 120–23. For Silius' geographical interests more generally, see Nicol (1936) 129–31; Bona (1998), especially 233–52 on Sicily.

³⁵ For brief discussion of the dates of foundation of Greek colonies in Sicily, see Feeney (2007) 97.

³⁶ Cf. the discussion of Sicily in Feeney (2007) 47–52, 57.

³⁷ For near-contemporary interest in Thucydides on Sicily, cf. Plin. *Nat.* 3.86.

³⁸ See Thomas' (1982) study.

³⁹ See further Woodman (1977) 107–8 on Vell. 2.96.3 and (1988) 183.

⁴⁰ For the opening reference to the Trinacrian land in *Pun.* 14.11 (paralleled in verse at the start of Ovid's narratives of Ceres at *Met.* 5.346–47 and *Fast.* 4.419–20), cf. Thuc. 6.2.2, where Gomme, Andrews, and Dover (1970) 211 note the connexion with the Thrinacian island (Θρινάκτι νήσῳ) at *Od.* 11.107, Timaeus *FGH* 566 F 37 (where Jacoby's commentary with n. 247 discusses ancient forms of the name), Diod. Sic. 5.2.1, Str. 6.2.1. Roosjen (1996) 47 cites numerous poetic parallels for Sicily as the three-cornered island, but the point needs to be made that Trinacria has its role in historiographical traditions relating to the naming of Sicily as well.

⁴¹ See further Horsfall (2006) 310.

and Strabo (6.1.6) make reference to the tradition that the Greek name for the city of Rhegium⁴² was attributable to the island having at some point in the past broken off from the mainland.⁴³ Silius then mentions a *fama* that barking and the sound of birds can be heard across the straits, as an indication of the small scale of the channel (*Pun.* 14.20–22).⁴⁴ Here, I would suggest that Silius is playing with modes of narration, eschewing the opportunity to relate the fable of Scylla and the barking associated with her and with the straits;⁴⁵ or one can compare the way in which Seneca had dismissed Scylla in *Ep.* 79.1, when expecting Lucilius' account of his travels in Sicily: *nam Scyllam saxum esse et quidem non terribile nauigantibus optime scio* ("for I very well know that Scylla is a rock and, moreover, no terror to those sailing there").⁴⁶ Ironically, it is in fact the poet who is more restrained here than Pliny the Elder; contrast with Silius' account, Pliny's full use of the myth, in a way that is very close to *Aen.* 3.420–21: *in eo freto est scopulus Scylla, item Charybdis mare uerticosum* ("in that channel is the rock of Scylla and likewise the whirlpool of Charybdis," *Nat.* 3.87; cf. *Sal. Hist.* 4.28 Reynolds).⁴⁷ Indeed, Pliny affords a more interesting parallel. Though Spaltenstein on *Pun.* 14.20 refers to *Plin. Nat.* 6.2 on the two Bospori, and suggests that Silius has simply erred here,⁴⁸ a more creative approach is to embrace the echo of Pliny, whatever its reason may have been, and instead to observe that one effect of the passage in Silius is to give a greater air of scholarly geographical enquiry: the reference to barking brilliantly evokes—but also rejects—the excessively poetic story of Scylla, which Silius does not provide here.⁴⁹ The passage becomes all the more effective, if we recall how Strabo reports that Polybius discussed Scylla in the context of the merits of Homeric geography

⁴² See also C. Acilius (*FGrH* 813 F 3), *Diod. Sic.* 4.85.3–4, *Str.* 6.1.6 for the explanation of the name Rhegium; cf. *Sal. Hist.* 4.26 Reynolds, *Mela* 2.115, *Luc.* 2.433–38. For historiographical interest in the physical origins of islands, and their role as potential utopias, see Gabba (1981) 55–60.

⁴³ See further Nicol (1936) 159–60, Bona (1998) 233–34 with notes.

⁴⁴ For historiographical interest in measurement of the strait, see e.g., *Thuc.* 6.1.2.

⁴⁵ Cf. e.g., *Catul.* 60.2, *Virg. Ecl.* 6.74–75, *Ov. Met.* 7.64–65, 14.59–60, *Pont.* 4.10.25.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Sal. Hist.* 4.27 Reynolds and *Mela* 2.115.

⁴⁷ Note too that though Seneca dismisses the significance of Scylla in *Ep.* 79.1, he asks Lucilius to tell him whether Charybdis corresponds to what is found in the *fabulae*.

⁴⁸ Spaltenstein (1990) 284; see also Roosjen (1996) 51.

⁴⁹ For similar play on the auditory effects to be experienced in this region, cf. *Luc.* 6.65–66.

(Plb. 34.2–4 = Strabo 1.2.9, 1.2.15–17), and had approved of Homer's depiction of Scylla in *Od.* 12.95–97 as appropriate to the reports of tuna being eaten by larger specimens of marine life in the straits of Messina (Plb. 13.2.12–16).⁵⁰ Scylla is thus a curious place of intersection between the competing agendas of epic and historiography: Silius may be felt to excel here, evoking the story of Scylla but only through his silence, and thus surpassing in austerity even a historian, like Polybius, who is willing to accommodate some of the content of Homer.

Silius continues with an account of the produce of Sicily, reporting on the fertility of the soil⁵¹ and various products such as olives, wine, and honey (*Pun.* 14.23–26). Here we can note again how Silius' practice recalls that of ethnography, since descriptions of produce are a common feature of ethnographic writing.⁵² Silius goes on to talk about the healing qualities of the sulfurous springs, and the quality of the Sicilian poets (*Pun.* 14.27–30).

After noting briefly the facility of the people of Sicily in handling both war and oratory, Silius moves on to the history of the island. Even the reference to Antiphates and the reign of the Cyclopes (*Pun.* 14.33) recalls a detail in Thucydides, who refers to the Cyclopes and the Laestrygonians as the earliest inhabitants (Thuc. 6.2.2),⁵³ whilst conceding that this is really a matter for poets. Here we can be very conscious of the way in which Silius does not avoid historiographical controversy on Sicily's inhabitants.⁵⁴ Thus, when Silius declares that the Sicanians came from Spain, he follows Thucydides (6.2.2) in rejecting traditions of autochthony.⁵⁵ Silius' use of the phrase *terrae... uacanti* ("a land lying empty," *Pun.* 14.36) is a clever glance at and rejection of the alternative tradition of autochthony.⁵⁶ It is also striking how Silius

⁵⁰ On this whole passage of Polybius, see Walbank (1957–79) 3:577–87.

⁵¹ For the quality of the land in Sicily, cf. e.g. Diod. Sic. 5.2.4; Str. 6.2.3 (= Posidon. F 234 Kidd) and 6.2.7; Lucr. 1.728.

⁵² See e.g., Thomas (1982) 1.

⁵³ Dench (1995) 37–38 suggests that these traditions may reflect very early responses of Greek travellers and colonists to existing inhabitants of Sicily.

⁵⁴ For 'Thucydides' engagement with Hellanicus, see e.g., Gomme, Andrews, and Dover (1970) 200 (in their introductory remarks on Thuc. 6.2–5).

⁵⁵ Contrast Diod. Sic. 5.2.4, who affirms the tradition that the Sicanians were autochthonous. Cf. also Diod. Sic. 5.6.2, who notes that Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 38) had argued for autochthony, against the view of Philistus (*FGrH* 556 F 45); see further Vattuone (1991) 316 with n. 53. Str. 6.2.4 simply notes that some of the barbarian inhabitants of Sicily were autochthonous, while others were not.

⁵⁶ The detail of the Sicanians being the first to plough the land in Sicily (*Pun.* 14.34) is also worth noting. It evokes the kind of ethnographic interest in the beginnings of

adopts the Thucydidean detail of the people taking their name from a river. At the same time, Silius does not follow the Greek historian in referring to the Sicanians being affected by the Ligurians (Thuc. 6.2.2), but instead mentions the Ligurians in a different context,⁵⁷ in his description of the next people, the Sicels.⁵⁸

In the lines that follow on the antiquities of Sicily, Silius continues his brilliant and erudite progress through both poetic and historiographical traditions and controversies. The next inhabitants mentioned are the Cretans, and here Silius appears at first sight to move away from learned historical controversy on the migration of the Sicels towards much more poetic territory. In considering the island's association with the legendary Minos (*Pun.* 14.39–44), he describes how Minos sought to pursue Daedalus after the latter's escape from Crete to Sicily⁵⁹ but is eventually killed by the daughters of Cocalus, while his followers settle down in Sicily. Here one obvious point of contact for Silius might be Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which contains a brief reference to Daedalus' escape from Crete:

Iamque fatigatum tellus Aetnaea tenebat
Daedalon, et sumptis pro supplice Cocalus armis
mitis habebatur, iam lamentabile Athenae
pendere desiderant Thesea laude tributum. (Ov. *Met.* 8.260–63)

And now the Aetnaean land held Daedalus in his exhaustion, and Cocalus, after taking up arms on behalf of a suppliant, was considered to be gentle; now Athens had ceased to pay its lamentable tribute, thanks to the glorious deed of Theseus.

agriculture that one finds in e.g. Virg. *G.* 1.147–48, but may be also felt to echo and add to the detail in Homer (*Od.* 9.108) that the Cyclopes neither tended plants nor used the plough.

⁵⁷ This connection with Liguria is complex. A more southerly location for the previous home of the Sicels seems implied by D.H. *AR* 1.22.1. On the other hand, note D.H. *AR* 1.22.4 (= Philistus *FGrH* 556 F 46) for the people being not Ausonians or Elymians, but Ligurians, under the leadership of Sicelus, the son of Italus (cf. Silius' *Siculo ductore* in *Pun.* 14.37 and see Roosjen [1996] 59); the cause for their departure was the pressure exercised by the Umbrians and the Pelasgians. D.H. *AR* 1.22.5 (= Antiochus of Syracuse *FGrH* 555 F 4), however, refers to Antiochus saying that the Sicels were made to migrate by the Oenotrians and Oscans (Opikoi); Thuc. 6.2.4 refers to the Sicels fleeing the Oscans. See also Diod. Sic. 5.2.1.

⁵⁸ Thuc. 6.2.3 refers to intermediate migrations from survivors from Troy (the Elymians, who founded Eryx and Segesta), and to various Phocians who also came to Sicily.

⁵⁹ Note that Silius also alludes at *Pun.* 12.89–103 to the Virgilian tradition of Daedalus escaping to Italy; see further Roosjen (1996) 200.

In fact, however, in this *tour de force* of Sicilian antiquities Silius' interleaved and often conflicting erudition is revealed. The Flavian poet is not following Ovid in every detail here. Ovid's account can be paralleled by Diodorus Siculus, who has the same detail of Minos being killed by Cocalus (Diod. Sic. 4.79.2) and the Cretans staying on in Sicily after their king's death (Diod. Sic. 4.79.5–6). But this is not the story told by Silius, whose account instead recalls the tradition attested in Callimachus (fr. 43.46–49 Pfeiffer): the Cretan king is killed by the daughters of Cocalus while bathing.⁶⁰ One might note, however, that Cocalus seems to have been of some importance in the historiographical tradition as well: thus Diodorus (12.71.2) asserts that Antiochus of Syracuse began his history with Cocalus (*FGrH* 555 T 3), while Cocalus was also present in Ephorus (*FGrH* 70 F 57) and in the first book of Philistus (*FGrH* 556 F 1). Hence Silius' digression on Sicily evokes the manner of historiography as well.

Silius then moves on to a further area of historical debate and controversy with his treatment of Acestes and Helymus:

miscuerunt Phrygiam prolem Troianus Acestes
Troianusque Helymus, structis qui pube secuta
in longum ex sese donarunt nomina muris. (*Pun.* 14.45–47)

Trojan Acestes and Trojan Helymus mingled the Phrygian race; who, followed by their young men, gave their own names to the walls that had been constructed, names to last a long time.⁶¹

On the surface, the reference here to the two figures appears straightforwardly Virgilian, alluding to the presence of Aeneas and the Trojans in Sicily that is mentioned in *Aeneid* 5: Virgil mentions both characters in the same line (*Aen.* 5.73), where they are listed as leading participants in the memorial games for Anchises. Strikingly, however, Virgil makes it clear in the list of participants in the running contest that Elymus is actually of Sicilian origin:

tum duo Trinacrii iuuenes, Helymus Panopesque
adsueti siluis, comites senioris Acestae; (*Aen.* 5.300–1)

⁶⁰ One can also note that Ovid refers at greater length to Minos' death at *Il.* 287–88, though without specifically mentioning the perpetrator; for similar lack of clarity, compare Str. 6.3.2, who simply refers to the death taking place at the home of Cocalus.

⁶¹ The reference here is to the foundation of the cities of Segesta and Elyma; see further Roosjen (1996) 62.

Then there are two Trinacrian youths, Helymus and Panopes, accustomed to the woods, companions of aged Acestes.

Thus, when Silius repeats the epithet *Troianus* in 14.46 in describing Helymus, the reiteration, coupled also with the word *Phrygiam*, draws attention to a ‘correction’ of Virgil, as we can see Silius engaging with the complex traditions over the status and origins of the Elymians, inhabitants of western Sicily.⁶² If the transmitted text is sound,⁶³ *Troianusque* is a detail that may be considered to engage with historiographical as well as poetic texts, since Silius’ response to Virgil here may mirror some of the controversy found in historiographers; it also points to his poetic predecessor’s engagement with these controversies. Thus Hellanicus refers to the Elymians coming from Italy (*FGrH* 4 F 79b = D.H. *A.R.* 1.22.3), as a result of pressure from the Oenotrians, whereas Thucydides describes them as τῶν Τρώων τινές (“some of the Trojans,” 6.2.3), fleeing from the Achaeans after the fall of Troy and arriving in Sicily.⁶⁴ The status of Helymus continues to generate uncertainty, if we turn to later texts as well. Thus we hear in Lycophron (*Alex.* 965–67) of a bastard son of Anchises coming to Sicily, where Tzetzes’ scholion (on *Alex.* 965) explains that this was Helymus, brought to Sicily by Acestes. Similarly, the Servian commentaries refer to Helymus as a Trojan prince (*ad Aen.* 5.73) and to various views on his identity, including a tradition that Helymus was said by Fabius Pictor to have been born in Sicily and to have been the brother of Eryx.⁶⁵ Silius’ mention of Helymus thus represents a complex interaction with previous controversy and demonstrates that the *Punica* must be envisaged from the perspectives both of poetry and of historiography. The subtlety of this approach is illustrated by the way in which apparent engagement with the detail of *Aeneid* 5 turns out to evoke the manner

⁶² For this technique of “correction,” see e.g. Thomas (1986) 185–88. On the presence of the Elymians in the archaeological record, see Leighton (1999) 217, 221.

⁶³ I have considered the possibility of emending to *Trinacriusque*, but the complexity of the historical traditions about Helymus makes me prone to explore what *Troianusque* might signify here.

⁶⁴ The issue of whether Thucydides himself made use of Hellanicus is debated: see e.g., Gomme, Andrews, and Dover (1970) 200.

⁶⁵ Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 5.300, for the suggestion that Virgil hints at Helymus accompanying Acestes to Sicily. Note too Str. 13.1.53, who records a story that Helymus sailed with Aeneas from Troy to Segesta.

of historiography. Thus even a poetic text, such as the *Aeneid*, can generate a response that evokes historiography.⁶⁶

At this point, Silius' treatment of Sicily moves its focus from the traditions of migrations to the island's cities. In this respect, Silius reflects on the Thucydidean shift from early inhabitants (called βάρβαροι, when Thucydides sums up non-Greek settlement in the island at the end of 6.2.6) to Greek colonization (6.3–5). In Silius, we hear briefly of Zancle and its foundation:

nec Zancalea gerunt obscuram moenia famam,
dextera quam tribuit posito Saturnia telo. (*Pun.* 14.48–49)

And the walls of Zancle have a fame that is not obscure, which Saturn's right hand gave, when he laid down his weapon.

Again, we see the intersection of both poetic and historical material here. The reference to Zancle recalls Thucydides' discussion of the city (6.4.5), where the name is explained in terms of the Sicel word for a sickle.⁶⁷ Silius' remark on the fame of Zancle may be felt to contain a further irony, because Thucydides goes on to explain (6.4.6) that the name was changed to Messene (Messina), when the tyrant of Rhegium, Anaxilas (from Messene in the Peloponnese), changed the city's name in honor of his homeland.⁶⁸ There are, however, strongly poetic elements here also. The adjective *Zancaleus* only appears in Latin in the poetry of Ovid and then in Silius (*Ov. Met.* 13.729, *Fast.* 4.499, *Tr.* 5.2.73; *Pun.* 14.48, 113).⁶⁹ Most importantly, the reference in *Pun.* 14.49 to Saturn's right hand recalls the poetic tradition that the discarded

⁶⁶ For this aspect of the *Aeneid* itself, see e.g., Wiseman (1979) 143, 153.

⁶⁷ In his commentary on Hecataeus (*FGH* 1 F 72), Jacoby argues that in Timaeus the name Zancle is derived from a king, Zanclos (see *Diod. Sic.* 4.85.1). See also *Str.* 6.2.3.

⁶⁸ One can further note the prominence of Messina in the history of Romano-Carthaginian relations in the Mamertine crisis at the start of the First Punic War. At *Pun.* 1.662–63, in referring to Rome's support for the Mamertines, Silius calls the city *Zancle*. Contrast *Pun.* 14.194, where Silius calls the city *Messena*.

⁶⁹ *Plin. Nat.* 3.91 uses the plural as a noun to refer to the people of the city. For *Zancle*, see *Ov. Met.* 14.5, 15.290, *Pun.* 1.662; *Plin. Nat.* 4.15 refers to a homonymous place in the Peloponnese. Ovid also uses quadrisyllabic form of the adjective *Zancaleus* at *Met.* 14.47. Note also *Culex* 332, where for *metuenda Charybdis* ("fearsome Charybdis"), the manuscript V reads *zancalea Charybdis* ("Charybdis of Zancle"); in the OCT of the *Appendix Vergiliana*, Clausen suggests the variant is the result of contamination from Ovid.

sickle with which he had castrated his father, Uranus, becomes the origin of the city's name (as alluded to in *Call. Aet.* fr. 43.69–72).⁷⁰

Silius then continues with Syracuse, which he praises, citing its prominence among the rest of the island's cities and alluding to its Corinthian foundation (*Pun.* 14.50–52). Again, we can see here how Silius draws on a wide range of material. Thus, as Spaltenstein notes, the mention of the beauty of Syracuse (*sed decus Hennaëis haud ullum pulchrius oris*, “but there is no splendor more beautiful in the Ennaean regions,” *Pun.* 14.50) can be interpreted as a reference to the city's surpassing beauty celebrated in prose authors, such as Cicero (*Cic. Ver.* 4.117) and Livy (25.24.11).⁷¹ This is an idea which goes back to Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 40 = *Cic. Rep.* 3.35: *urbs illa praeclara, quam ait Timaeus Graecarum maximam, omnium autem esse pulcherrimam*, “that outstanding city, which Timaeus says is the greatest of Greek cities, but is the most beautiful of all cities”).⁷² One might note too that the motif of comparison with other locations recalls poetic texts, such as the praise of Italy in Virgil (*G.* 2.136–39), where other lands are said to be inferior to Italy. An even more pertinent parallel here is the way in which Silius' admiration of Syracuse recalls and caps the similar negative comparison used by Lucretius to praise Empedocles as the greatest creation of Sicily:

nil tamen hoc habuisse uiro praeclarius in se
nec sanctum magis et mirum carumque uidetur. (*Lucr.* 1.729–30)

The country seems, however, to have had nothing more distinguished in it, and nothing more holy, and wondrous and dear than this man.

Silius closes this section with a reference to the spring of Arethusa:

hic Arethusa suum piscoso fonte receptat
Alpheon sacrae portantem signa coronae. (*Pun.* 14.53–54)

Here Arethusa receives her own Alpheus in her fishy spring, as he carries the signs of the sacred garland.

⁷⁰ See Pfeiffer's notes for further testimonia. Note that Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 79) is credited with linking the former name of Corcyra, Drepane, with a similar legend; see further Jacoby's commentary.

⁷¹ Spaltenstein (1990) 287; cf. Roosjen (1996) 63.

⁷² On this fragment, see Feeney (2007) 49. For the influence of Cicero's *Rep.* on Silius, see Heck (1970) and Ripoll (2000b) 164–73.

These lines glance strongly at the poetic tradition that the nymph Arethusa is turned into a river in order to escape the attentions of the river Alpheus and flows from Arcadia under the ground (and the sea), only to emerge in Sicily on the isle of Ortygia (see e.g., Virg. *Ecl.* 10.4–5, Ov. *Met.* 5.577–641; there are also traditions that the river Alpheus follows her, as at Virg. *Aen.* 3.694–96).⁷³ Once again, however, the attempt to see a strong divide between poetic and historiographical material and techniques collapses here, since Arethusa has an important role in historiographical texts as well. For instance, the spring Arethusa was discussed by Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 41) and Lycus of Rhegium (*FGrH* 570 F 9) and was itself a *locus* for Polybian polemic (Plb. 12.4d) against the foolishness of Timaeus.⁷⁴ Polybius' attack on Timaeus in this case, followed by Strabo (6.2.4), is related to the historian's claim that the origin of the fountain's waters in mainland Greece is demonstrated by the fact that the spring of Arethusa does not flow clear during the period of the Olympic festival, but is polluted by the dung of cattle that are to be sacrificed for the feast. Timaeus' claim that a golden vessel from Olympia was recovered in the spring of Arethusa, a topic apparently addressed by the poet Ibycus (*PMG* 323), is also attacked by Polybius and Strabo. If we view Silius' work from a historiographical perspective, we can see how he engages with the debate on the nature of the spring at Arethusa and joins with the poets (and Timaeus) against the more skeptical response to the legend represented by Polybius and Strabo. This might also allow us to see the odd phrase *sacrae portantem signa coronae* (*Pun.* 14.54) as a glance at the historians' debates; this phrase troubled Spaltenstein, who asks: "De fait, pourquoi y lancerait-on des couronnes?" The commentator explains *signa coronae* as an example of redundant phraseology,⁷⁵ but one might wonder whether *signa coronae* is in fact a more subtle, deliberately unspecific, glance at the historical traditions about the ability of the Alpheus to carry the debris of the Olympic festival—of whatever kind—to Sicily. The story of the dung is after all repeated by Seneca (*Nat.* 3.26.5), while Pliny the Elder also

⁷³ See further e.g., Carey (1981) 104–5 on Pi. *N.* 1.1–3; Horsfall (2006) 462–64 on Virg. *Aen.* 3.694–96. Manni (1981) 98–99 provides further ancient testimonia on Arethusa.

⁷⁴ See Walbank (1957–79) 2:329; cf. Dench (1995) 51 and Feeney (2007) 232 n. 22.

⁷⁵ See Spaltenstein (1990) 288, where he also refers to his note on *Pun.* 1.336 [in (1986) 57–58] which deals with redundancies of phrasing; cf. Roosjen (1996) 65. Cf. Bona (1998) 240: "L'espressione siliana *sacrae portantem signa coronae* del v. 54 allude, come è ovvio, alle corone di Olimpia."

mentions the tradition of items thrown into the Alpheus appearing in the spring (*Nat.* 2.225). Once again, a place of apparent intersection with earlier poetic texts in Silius is also an opportunity for complex engagement with prose texts.

The remaining two sections of the account of Sicily can, for reasons of space, be treated more briefly, but are still worth noting here. In the first, Silius talks about the volcanic phenomena of the region, describing first Lipara, and then the appearance of Etna (*Pun.* 14.55–70). Once again, Silius incorporates material which allows him to exploit both poetic and historical predecessors at the same time. Etna had been the subject of a poem in its own right, the *Aetna*, which is very unlikely to have been written after the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79,⁷⁶ but the Latin poetic tradition affords several other treatments of the mountain (such as Lucr. 1.722–25, 6.639–702, Virg. *Aen.* 3.570–82), which is also described by Seneca (*Ep.* 79.5) as *sollemnem omnibus poetis locum*, “a place of awe for all poets.”⁷⁷ At the same time, Etna has interested historians, geographers, and philosophers as well (see e.g., Thuc. 3.116, Posidon. F 234 Kidd, Str. 6.2.3, Sen. *Nat.* 2.30.1, *Ep.* 79);⁷⁸ again this passage shows the phenomenon of Silius’ using content which evokes both poetic and prose predecessors.

The final section on the promontories of Sicily (*Pun.* 14.72–78) represents a similar fusion of poetic and geographical concerns, as Silius returns to discuss the three promontories that give Sicily the name of Trinacria he uses in 14.11.⁷⁹ Spaltenstein claims Silius follows Ovid’s discussion of the promontories of the three-cornered isle (*Met.* 13.724–27).⁸⁰ While the parallel is useful, the point again needs to be made that, in the context of an account of the antiquities and geography of Sicily, such a passage also recalls historiographical interest in the promontories of Sicily. A whole series of prose authors mention Sicily’s three sides in terms of its three promontories (such as e.g., Plb. 1.42.1–6, Posidon. F 249 Kidd, Diod. Sic. 5.2.2, Str. 6.2.1, Mela 2.155, Plin. *Nat.* 3.86).⁸¹ Viewed from this perspective, Silius chooses

⁷⁶ For discussion of the date, see Goodyear (1965) 58–59.

⁷⁷ Horsfall (2006) 394–403 offers an invaluable guide to the Virgilian passage.

⁷⁸ For detailed list of ancient testimonia relating to Etna, see Manni (1981) 79–82.

⁷⁹ See Roosjen (1996) 46 for discussion of the use of ring composition in this Sicilian excursus.

⁸⁰ Spaltenstein (1990) 289. Ovid also deals with the promontories of Sicily at *Met.* 5.350–51 and *Fast.* 4.479–80.

⁸¹ See also Nicol (1936) 147–48.

to vary the discussion of the three sides of the island and its promontories, a theme which often in historical or geographical texts on Sicily is used as an opening device, by moving it to the end of the excursus, but, as we have seen throughout the section on Sicily's antiquities and its geography, Silius' constant strategy is to evoke the manner both of the poet and of the historian, something peculiarly appropriate for the opening section of a book which deals with events in Sicily.

5. *Speeches*

A brief discussion on the role of speeches in Silius is in order.⁸² Speeches are a standard feature not only of epic poetry, but also of ancient historiography. Silius' approach again shows how he is willing to manipulate and play with historiographical tropes. We do, of course, find speeches in Silius which can be paralleled in Livy. Thus at *Pun.* 7.386–408, Fabius Maximus advises Minucius Rufus to avoid fighting against Hannibal, as he leaves Minucius in order to return to Rome on religious business.⁸³ This can be compared to Livy's account (22.18.8–10), where we have a similar admonition, though in indirect discourse. Elsewhere, we can see rather more complex engagement with speeches, of which I will present one example here:⁸⁴ as we shall see, Silius almost improves on some of the historians in terms of his representation of events.

Let us focus on the pair of speeches delivered in the Carthaginian senate by Hanno and Gestar in *Punica* 2, prior to the outbreak of war.⁸⁵ Silius is already engaged in telescoping events, or rather, perhaps

⁸² For discussion of the sources of Silius' speeches, see Nicol (1936) 96–107, who argues that Livy is the key source.

⁸³ For Silius' treatment of Fabius in the light of the historical record, see Nicol (1936) 70–78.

⁸⁴ For another instance, note the way in which Silius records (*Pun.* 17.338–40) that every time Scipio tries to speak before Zama, his troops, impatient for battle, prevent him; Livy has a pair of speeches from Hannibal and Scipio, Silius only one from Hannibal.

⁸⁵ One may note that the speeches assigned to Cn. Cornelius Lentulus and Q. Fabius Maximus in *Pun.* 1.676–94 (on which see Nicol [1936] 20) are paralleled in the so-called annalistic tradition: see D.C. fr. 55, and Zonar. 8.22, where Dio gives extracts from the speeches, while Zonaras assigns them to the same speakers as Silius. Silius strikingly uses indirect discourse, perhaps an appropriate touch of *verismo* in historical epic; see further Feeney (1982) 341–43 for an excellent discussion of the use of indirect discourse here as evocative of historiographical practice. The authenticity

more artfully, in eliding a troubling doublet, namely, the two Roman embassies to Carthage from Rome during the Saguntine crisis,⁸⁶ and in obscuring the inertia on the part of the Romans, a point already noted by Livy (*dum Romani tempus terunt legationibus mittendis, Hannibal...*, “while the Romans are wasting time in sending embassies, Hannibal...” 21.11.3).⁸⁷ Livy does give a speech from Hanno (21.10), but there are various differences between the poet and the historian. First of all, in Livy the occasion is the first embassy, not the second. Hanno’s speech (*Pun.* 2.279–326) is moved by Silius to the moment of the war’s outbreak to suggest the deep division of attitudes. Secondly, in Livy no one replies to Hanno, since the Carthaginian senate is pro-Hannibalic (21.11.1); Silius, however, inserts a speech in reply from Gestar (*Pun.* 2.327–74).⁸⁸ On one level, Silius’ concern here is to provide a poetic debate, so that the speeches of Hanno and Gestar against and for Hannibal might be compared to the debate between Turnus and Drances in *Aeneid* 11 (336–444), where enemies of Aeneas and of the Trojans argue concerning the continuation of war. However, the historiographical dimension in Silius’ account is still worth pursuing.

Silius contradicts the testimony of Livy but also of Polybius (3.20.9–10), who notes the anger of the Carthaginians at the Roman embassy and then simply reports a speech in reply (3.21), mainly haggling over the contents of earlier treaties. After a famous digression on these treaties, Polybius narrates a well-known anecdote: the Carthaginians tell the Roman ambassador to choose whether to let fall from his toga peace or war, while many of the Carthaginian senators cry out their acceptance of war (Plb. 3.33.4). Similarly Livy assigns a speech to an unidentified Carthaginian (21.18), who again alludes to traditional areas of dispute, such as the status of Saguntum and the treaty with Hasdrubal.

of the tradition of Roman debate about the outbreak of the Second Punic War is questioned by Plb. 3.20; Nesselrath (1986) 206–7 even argues that Silius contributes the names of Lentulus and Fabius to the historical tradition. But see now Lucarini (2004) 107–9, who argues again for the influence of Coelius Antipater, as a continuation of the tradition against which Polybius had argued.

⁸⁶ Cf. Nicol (1936) 67 and n. 3.

⁸⁷ Cf. the way in which Plb. 3.15.12–13 is the only direct reference to the first embassy to Carthage (dated by the Greek historian before the outbreak of the siege of Saguntum), which is then not mentioned again.

⁸⁸ On this pair of speeches, see also Nicol (1936) 105 and n. 1. Nesselrath (1986) 209–10 argues that Silius’ only recourse to a source is Livy here. But see now Lucarini (2004) 109–11, who argues for the use of another source. Cowan (2007b) 7–10 offers an important treatment of Gestar’s speech.

Silius' approach to this moment, however, takes a different path. The speeches of Hanno and Gestar concentrate on other matters. In the case of Hanno, we can notice such rhetorical devices as an opening statement of the dangers of speaking, before the main arguments, namely that Hannibal is a figure who will endanger the Carthaginians. There are shared features with Hanno's speech in Livy, such as the mention of the defeat in the First Punic War at the Aegates Islands, but Hanno presents this material as something for Hannibal (who is not even present) to conjure up for himself. The speech also offers a prophecy of defeat in Italy, something entirely absent from Hanno's speech in Livy.

Gestar's reply, in what seems to be an extraordinary re-run of the situation of Cicero's first speech against Catiline, opens brilliantly by presenting Hanno as the traitor who still dares to sit within the senate (*Pun.* 2.330–32; cf. *Cic. Catil.* 1.2),⁸⁹ and then contests the accounts of history past and future offered by Hanno. Epic and history fuse, in an ingenious version of the strategy of denouncing the Trojans as the losers of the Trojan war, used by Aeneas' enemies in Virgil: in Gestar's speech, Atilius Regulus, defeated in North Africa, is called the *spes et fiducia gentis/...Hectoreae* ("the hope and trust of the Hectorean race," *Pun.* 2.342–43).⁹⁰ Briefly, Gestar even contemplates the possibility that the gods are against Carthage and that the Carthaginians will lose, before acknowledging that this is better than disgrace (*Pun.* 2.364–66). He even claims that the Roman negotiators are demanding that the Carthaginians must refrain from the sea (*toto absistite ponto*, *Pun.* 2.371), which surely evokes the previous instruction in the same line, namely that Carthage should burn its ships; but most disturbingly it also recalls the strange negotiations that take place before the start of the Third Punic War, where one of the terms offered to Carthage is the requirement that the Carthaginians abandon their city and move inland, on account of the need to erase any reminder of their former sea-power (*App. Pun.* 81, 86, 88).

⁸⁹ See also Nicol (1936) 105 n. 1, who compares these lines with the Carthaginian reaction to Hanno's speech in Liv. 21.11.1. For the possible influence of *Cic. Catil.* 1, cf. Ripoll (2000b) 158–59 who suggests that the *prosopopoeia* at *Catil.* 1.27 may have inspired *Pun.* 13.12–14 and 15.546–59.

⁹⁰ For discussion of the epithet *Hectoreus*, see Cowan (2007b) 9–10. Mockery of enemies in terms of previous failures is also found in historiography: note, for example, the speech of the German Arminius in Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.15).

On the surface, Silius' treatment of the events in the Carthaginian senate might appear to have little in common with what one might find in a historian, especially when compared to Livy's own speech of Hanno or to the account of the encounter in the Carthaginian senate in Polybius. Nevertheless, another way to look at what Silius is doing here might be to consider the speeches in terms of Silius' *inuentio*.⁹¹ In a famous attack on Timaeus, Polybius attacks the historian for failing to provide material drawn from the actual content of speeches: Timaeus makes up what he believes should have been said, a practice which for Polybius is akin to empty oratorical display, devoid of factual content (Plb. 12.25, sections a and i).⁹² In this attack on Timaeus, as is well known, Polybius is taking a position on the issue of the status of speeches in historiography, a problem which goes back to Thucydides. Rather than revisit the perennial problem of what Thucydides means in 1.22,⁹³ one might turn attention in the other direction and consider what Polybius' attack on Timaeus implies about the kinds of approaches to speeches that were possible. If an extreme reading of what is being said about Timaeus is that he is able to make up any kind of speech, then the notion of a speech composed in the light of probability is certainly possible. From this point of view, Silius has provided something plausible: it is reasonable to suppose that someone in Carthage must have talked about whether the war would be successful, especially as the end of the Mercenary War had seen Carthage meekly handing over Sardinia to Rome (Plb. 1.88.8–12). Moreover, discussion about the viability of a war, and indeed prophecies of disaster have their place in ancient historiography. And let us not forget that Silius gives us a balanced pair of opposing speeches—again something hardly rare in historiographical texts. Thus Silius' speeches in this episode may seem to improve on some of the pre-existing material, when considered by the criterion of *inuentio*: the key is to think of historical epic not in terms of history but in terms of historiography.

Finally, one can note how Silius actually goes further than historical texts in conveying some hesitancy on the part of the Carthaginians

⁹¹ For the role of *inuentio* in classical historiography, the key discussion is Woodman (1988) 87–94.

⁹² On this passage, see e.g., Sacks (1981) 79–95 and Marincola (2001) 128–33. Vatone (1991) 237–66 offers an important treatment of speeches in Timaeus.

⁹³ Marincola (2001) 77–85 is a useful recent summary of the issues, with references to earlier scholarship.

in launching this war. Hanno, it is true, is a lone voice, but in *Pun.* 2.375–90 we may note a whole series of incidental details after the two speeches, a contrast to Polybius' account of the Carthaginians readily accepting war. Thus in Silius we hear (though with no further clarification) that a vote is taken, but that Hanno attempts, extraordinarily, to intervene with further remarks, to the astonishment of the Carthaginian senators (2.376–80). Moreover, Fabius' first utterance to the senate is prefaced by a description of his awareness of their *discordia... /pectora* ("discordant hearts," 2.380–81) and a sense that their deceitful minds are inclined towards war (2.381). This is perhaps to be expected, but nevertheless the effect after Hanno's speech is to suggest that the feelings against war are not inconsiderable in Carthage. It is true that the Carthaginian senate is described as *saeuo* (*Pun.* 2.386), when refusing to give an answer, but once war itself is declared, there is no indication of Polybius' claims of Carthaginian acceptance of conflict. Whereas Nicol, in spite of his erudite analysis of the extensive range of texts and variant traditions drawn upon by Silius, is on occasion concerned to deny to the poet the capacity even for "invention,"⁹⁴ I believe that Silius' poem should be envisaged more creatively, in terms of the kind of *inuentio* which ancient historians are pleased to use frequently and readily.

6. Conclusion

The previous examples have given a sense of the complexities of Silius' working with historical (and geographical) material. Rather than considering Silius simply as the passive receiver of sources and content, our reading of Silius can be enriched, if we are willing to consider him in the larger context of historiographical practice and concerns. With his emphasis on the way in which the poet is interested not only in Virgil but also in Cicero,⁹⁵ Martial presents a salutary reminder that, strange though the invitation to see Silius as if he were writing

⁹⁴ See e.g., Nicol (1936) 4–5, 49.

⁹⁵ On Mart. 11.48, see Pomeroy (1989) 121, who rightly argues for the importance of Cicero for Silius (132–35). For Silius' use of Cicero in book 14, compare Arethusa's *piscoso fonte* (*Pun.* 14.53) with Cicero's description of the spring as full of fish (*Ver.* 4.118), as noted by Spaltenstein (1990) 288; cf. also Diod. Sic. 5.3.6. Ripoll (2000b) offers an extensive discussion of Cicero's influence on Silius.

historiography might seem, prose texts might after all be more at stake than we might think:

Silius haec magni celebrat monimenta Maronis,
 iugera facundi qui Ciceronis habet.
 heredem dominumque sui tumuliue larisue
 non alium mallet nec Maro nec Cicero. (Mart. 11.48)

Silius celebrates these monuments of great Virgil, a man who possesses the acres of eloquent Cicero. No other heir and master of their tomb or home would Virgil or Cicero prefer.

The key, as I hope to have emphasized, is to consider Silius in terms of historiography, rather than in terms of history.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ See Muecke's essay in this volume (417) on Domizio Calderini's observation: *Silius poetica licentia fabulam cum historia commiscuit* ("using poetic licence Silius has mingled myth with history").

CHAPTER FOUR

VIRGIL'S DIDO AND THE HEROISM OF HANNIBAL IN SILIUS' *PUNICA*

Randall T. Ganiban*

As Dido watches Aeneas leave Carthage in *Aeneid* 4, she prays that her people will be eternal enemies of the Trojans and their descendants, and that an avenger will rise up from her bones:¹

tum uos, o Tyrii, stirpem et genus omne futurum
exercete odiis, cinerique haec mittite nostro
munera. nullus amor populis nec foedera sunt.
exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor
qui face Dardanios ferroque sequare colonos,
nunc, olim, quocumque dabunt se tempore uires. (*Aen.* 4.622–27)

Then, Tyrians, harass with hatred his stock and his entire future race and send to my ashes these gift offerings. Let no love, nor treaties exist between our nations. Rise, some avenger, from my bones to pursue the Trojan settlers with torch and sword, now, hereafter, whenever power will be given to you.²

Her words look forward to one of the bleakest moments in Roman history, the war against Hannibal, the *ultor* of line 625.³ Virgil presents Dido's prayer as the origin of the Second Punic War, and by doing so suggests, on the metaliterary level, the opportunity for another epic, a poem that presents this confrontation as a result of the disastrous love affair between Aeneas and Dido, and thus also as a sequel to the *Aeneid*.⁴ Silius takes up this challenge and gives Dido a special role

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¹ See, e.g., von Albrecht (1964) 52–53; Delz (1969) 89; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2495–96; Feeney (1991) 303; Bernstein (2008) 137 and in this volume (380). Feeney also cites *Aen.* 10.11–14, where Jupiter prophesies the Punic wars.

² Translations are my own.

³ On internal and external prolepsis in Virgil and Silius, see Harrison's essay in this volume (277–92).

⁴ See, e.g., von Albrecht (1964) 52–53; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2495. Cf. Keith's article in this volume on Dido and Orientalism in the *Punica* (353–73).

in his treatment of Hannibal's war against Rome in the *Punica*. This paper will examine the key passages where Dido's story appears (1.21–139, 2.406–52, and 8.25–241)⁵ and will show how the mythical queen both shapes Hannibal's character and explains the tragic nature of his heroism.

1. *The causes of the Hannibalic War: Dido, Juno, and Hannibal's oath*

The war with Hannibal nearly brought about the downfall of Rome, and Silius makes this historical fact central to the construction of the *Punica*. He presents Hannibal as a fascinating villain⁶ and lavishes more than half of the epic on the general's stunning successes in the first three years of the conflict, culminating in his devastating victory at Cannae in 216 BC (though the war itself continued until 201 BC).⁷ Silius begins the epic by explaining the two main causes that led Hannibal to inflict such terrible suffering on the Romans. As we shall see in this section, Hannibal's motivations as set forth at 1.21–139 are inter-related through their association with Dido and programmatically present the mythological and literary forces that will define his character.⁸

Silius introduces the question of Hannibal's motivations in words that reveal how the causation of historical events will be treated throughout the *Punica*:⁹

tantarum causas irarum odiumque perenni
seruatum studio et mandata nepotibus arma
fas aperire mihi superasque recludere mentes.
iamque adeo magni repetam primordia motus. (*Pun.* 1.17–20)

I am allowed to reveal the causes of such great anger, the hatred preserved with everlasting zeal, the weapons consigned to grandsons, and

⁵ For references to Dido (Elissa) in other passages, see 2.239, 2.391, 3.82, 4.765, 6.313, 6.346, 7.488, 11.597, 14.258, 14.573, 15.521, 15.746, 16.614, 17.224.

⁶ He is much like Lucan's Caesar. See von Albrecht (1964) 54; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2501–4; Hardie (1993a) 64.

⁷ Wilson (1993) 230.

⁸ For discussion of these scenes, see especially von Albrecht (1964) 47–55; Feeney (1982) *ad loc.*; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2493–96.

⁹ Though Silius begins his poem by signaling Rome's eventual victory, he at the same time emphasizes how it was unclear at the time who would prevail (1.12–14); cf. Liv. 21.1.2. On the relationship between the opening of the *Punica* and the opening of Livy 21, see von Albrecht (1964) 16–20, Feeney (1982) *ad loc.*, and Pomeroy (1989) 124. For Silius' overall usage of Livy, see Nicol (1936) 17–125.

to disclose the intentions of the gods above. And now I shall start from the origins of this great disturbance.

In stating his goals thus, Silius draws on several dominant poetic models. The passage with its concern to elucidate wrath (*irarum*) and undying hatred (*odium...perenni seruatum studio*) reworks the beginning of the *Aeneid* (1.8–11), where Virgil asks how Aeneas, a man known for his *pietas*, could suffer so much from the anger of the goddess Juno.¹⁰ But these lines also suggest the influence of Lucan's epic on the civil war between Caesar and Pompey. Lucan, as one might expect from a poet of an historical epic, begins by explaining the *causae* of the war that he will retell (Luc. 1.67).¹¹ The Silian passage echoes both authors, suggesting them as potential models for propounding his war's origins. The account at 1.21–139, however, shows a characteristic prevalence for the former: instead of offering primarily historical causes in the tradition of Lucan, Silius concentrates on motivations strongly connected to the divine realm and the distant mythological past¹²—Juno's wrath and the oath Hannibal in his youth swore against Rome at Dido's temple.¹³

Silius' ensuing explanation for Juno's hatred of Rome (1.21–69), which incites Hannibal to action, looks back in the Roman literary tradition probably as far as Naevius¹⁴ but clearly resonates with the beginning of the *Aeneid* and its concern with Carthage. In Virgil, Juno rages against the Trojans because of her love for Carthage and her understanding that this city will eventually be defeated by the Trojans'

¹⁰ Feeney (1982) *ad loc.* notes that the phrase *repetam primordia motus* in *Pun.* 1.20 echoes *Aen.* 7.40.

¹¹ Lucan's phrasing, in turn, echoes the opening of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1.1–2).

¹² Not by necessity exclusively, however. For example, in the discussion of the oath that follows, we learn that Hamilcar is motivated by the unjust treaties (*foederibus*) that Rome has imposed on Carthage—though it should be recalled that Virgil's Dido had prayed that there be no treaties between Carthage and the Trojans' descendants (*Aen.* 4.624).

¹³ Wilson (1993) 218 writes: "In the *Punica*, each historical situation is treated as an occasion for poetic invention, for the imitation of scenes from the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Fasti* or *Metamorphoses*. History is, as it were, mythologized, wrenched not just in language but in event into the epic mode. The epic imagination is everywhere victorious over historical probability. History is there only to be transmuted."

¹⁴ Feeney (1991) 116–17 argues that the Juno's love of Carthage and consequent anger toward Rome may have originated as a theme in Latin poetry in Naevius, who seems to have provided the model for the opening sequence of *Aeneid* 1. Cf. also Buchheit (1963) 54–55 and Häußler (1978) 196–97, cited by Feeney. Juno certainly played this role in Ennius, cf. Feeney (1991) 303.

descendants, the Romans. The *Punica* takes place centuries after the narrative time of the *Aeneid*, but Silius initiates his explanation of Juno's wrath by looking from the present to the past, by moving from Hannibal's lifetime back to his city's origins in Dido. Silius emphasizes this connection as he begins his explanation of Juno's wrath in causing the war:

Pygmalioneis quondam per caerulea terris
pollutum fugiens fraterno crimine regnum
fatali Dido Libyes appellitur orae.
tum pretio mercata locos noua moenia ponit,
cingere qua secto permissum litora tauro. (Pun. 1.21–25)

In ancient times, Dido, fleeing the kingdom polluted by her brother's crime, was brought from Pygmalion's land across the sea to the fated shore of Libya. There, having bought land for a price, she built new walls where she was permitted to surround the shores with cut bull-hide.

The adjective *Pygmalioneis* seems a Silian coinage;¹⁵ placed at the beginning of the line, it pointedly introduces Juno's wrath by tying it to Dido's world. Pygmalion was Dido's brother who treacherously killed Sychaeus (Dido's husband), a story told at *Aeneid* 1.340–68. As a result, she fled west from Tyre and founded Carthage in northern Africa, the city that Juno herself had chosen for Dido and her fellow fugitives (*Pun.* 1.26–28). The reader is put on notice from the start that the distant, mythological past will play a profound role in explaining the present of the *Punica*.¹⁶

Although Juno seems reconciled to Rome's fate by the end of the *Aeneid*,¹⁷ we find that Silius' Juno is still opposed (1.29–33). Thus the *Punica* begins much as the *Aeneid* had—with Juno offended and taking action to obstruct fate. While in Virgil she has a storm sent against Aeneas and the Trojans that shipwrecks them at Dido's Carthage, Silius' Juno chooses another route. Having already failed to defeat

¹⁵ Feeney (1982) *ad loc.*

¹⁶ This formulation also portrays Dido sympathetically as one who suffered because of another's crime and presents her in the mold of an Aeneas. Like Aeneas, she flees her homeland because of a terrifying event in order to found a new city, and she is driven to the shores of Carthage, just as Aeneas is at *Aen.* 1.376–77. See, e.g., Feeney (1982) *ad loc.* and Spaltenstein (1986) 5–6. Such similarities between Aeneas and Dido are already present in the *Aeneid*, but they take on special relevance for the *Punica* and for Hannibal.

¹⁷ *Aen.* 12.791–842.

Rome in the First Punic War (*Pun.* 1.33–35), Juno selects Hannibal as the human figure to embody and carry out her hatred of Rome in a second war:

iterum instaurata capessens
arma remolitur; dux omnes¹⁸ sufficit unus
turbanti terras pontumque mouere paranti. (*Pun.* 1.35–37)

Taking hold of weapons renewed again, she sets war in motion; one leader suffices for her, as she disturbs all lands and prepares to rouse the sea.

In her use of Hannibal, Silius' Juno recalls not only the opening of *Aeneid* 1, where Juno rouses the storm against the Trojans (cf. *pontumque mouere*, *Pun.* 1.37) but also *Aeneid* 7.312, where Juno decides to *Acheronta mouere* ("rouse hell") and by doing so initiates the Italian war that occupies the second half of the epic.¹⁹ Silius' Juno continues her Virgilian counterpart's role as a figure who is associated with fury and is hostile to the advance of fate.²⁰ In this capacity, she infects Hannibal with her wrath at the Romans (1.55, 63). He, in turn, represents the antithesis of many of the virtues that are portrayed as Roman in the *Punica*:

Ingenio motus audius fideique sinister
is fuit, exsuperans astu, sed deuius aequi.
armato nullus diuum pudor... (*Pun.* 1.56–58)

By character he was desirous of upheaval, faithless to his promise, outstanding in cunning, but erratic with respect to justice. When armed, he had no respect for the gods...

Hannibal already desires to avenge Carthage's loss in the First Punic War (1.60–62). Now, under Juno's influence (cf. 1.38–55, 63),²¹ he dreams of the day when he will scale the Alps and destroy Rome (1.64–65).²² Hannibal is thus drawn into Juno's struggle against Rome.

Like Virgil's Juno, Silius' Juno and Hannibal are figures of dynamic narrative energy, who initiate the epic and function as its primary driving forces. Juno's infection of Hannibal also shows that Hannibal's

¹⁸ For this reading instead of *agmina*, see Feeney (1982) *ad loc.*

¹⁹ Cf. Keith (2000) 91.

²⁰ Moreover, as the Virgilian Dido's curse calls on the action of the Furies, and as the Furies govern revenge, her characterization as a kind of Fury-figure continues here and is made more explicit on the shield presented to Hannibal in book 2 (see below 84–91).

²¹ Cf. Hardie (1993a) 64.

²² Cf. *Aen.* 6.830–31, where Caesar is described crossing the Alps and descending on Rome. Note again the similarities between Caesar and Hannibal.

most powerful motivations come from the epic (not the historical) tradition, since it is only after Juno's action that he starts hostilities. Hannibal acts in a literary universe that provides supernatural causations (i.e., Juno's desires) that would seem to overpower or trump the historical ones that actually lie behind the Hannibalic War (and that are not fully explored in the *Punica*).

Silius, however, offers another compelling motivation for Hannibal—the oath he swore in his youth under the guidance of his father, the great Carthaginian general Hamilcar. Hamilcar had led Carthage in its first war against Rome but had lost. Still hoping for a second war, which he would not live to fight, he had his son take an oath to carry on his strife with Rome. Hannibal's oath is attested in the major historical sources to explain the depth of his enmity toward Rome, so it is not surprising that it would figure prominently in the *Punica*. Silius, however, makes an important and meaningful change: while Polybius states that the sacrifice was made to Zeus, Nepos to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and Livy to the gods,²³ the oath in Silius occurs at the temple of the former Carthaginian queen Dido.²⁴

Silius elaborately presents the oath at 1.70–139. First he describes Dido's temple (*Pun.* 1.81–86), which recalls both Dido's temple to Juno in *Aeneid* 1 (thereby interestingly mingling the two Virgilian characters as forces in the *Punica*) and her temple to Sychaeus described at *Aeneid* 4.457–59.²⁵ Moreover, he states that the temple stands where the queen committed suicide (1.85–86). This temple represents both a rebuke to Aeneas for his faithlessness and a reminder to the Carthaginians that revenge is still owed their famous ancestor. The connection between the present and past is further emphasized by the sculptures decorating the altar that include representations of important figures from Carthage's past: Agenor, Phoenix, Dido, Sychaeus, and Belus, the last being an ancestor shared by Dido and Hannibal (1.86–89).²⁶ The violence that Hannibal will inflict on the Romans thus not only fulfills Juno's anger but also allows him to honor his forebears by answering

²³ Plb. 3.11.5–7, Liv. 21.1.4, and Nep. *Han.* 2.3–5.

²⁴ See the discussions of the oath in von Albrecht (1964); Tupet (1980); Küppers (1986) 73–91; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2496; Laudizi (1989) 102–7; and Rothschild (1995) 105.

²⁵ Hardie (1993a) 64. See in this volume Harrison for a discussion of the proleptic ekphrasis at the temple of Dido (280–82) and Asso on the connection between Hercules and Hannibal (179–92).

²⁶ Cf. 1.72–73, 8.30–31, and see the discussion of the scene in book 8 below (91–96).

the prayer of Virgil's Dido for war with the Trojans/Romans (*Aen.* 4.628–29).²⁷

The interaction between Hamilcar and his young son Hannibal just before the oath is sworn (1.104–12) also has programmatic importance. Hamilcar is making a sacrifice when he calls upon his son to take up the cause of destroying Rome if he himself should fail:

olli permulcens genitor caput oscula libat
attollitque animos hortando et talibus implet:
'gens recidiua Phrygum Cadmeae stirpis alumnos
foederibus non aequa premit...' (*Pun.* 1.104–7)

Gently touching his son's head, the father gives him a kiss, rouses his passions through encouragement, and fills his spirit with the following words: "The returning race of the Phrygians unjustly burdens the children of Cadmus' lineage with treaties..."

These opening lines of Hamilcar's speech pointedly recall the *Aeneid* (1.254–56), when Jupiter allays Venus' concerns about Aeneas' sufferings: *Olli subridens hominum sator atque deorum / uultu, quo caelum tempestatesque serenat, / oscula libauit natae, dehinc talia fatur* ("Smiling at her with the expression he uses to calm storms and sky, the father of humans and gods kissed his daughter and then speaks as follows"). Virgil's Jupiter goes on in one of the most important passages in the epic to reveal the dictates of fate, thus providing an account of the future that serves as the context for our understanding of Aeneas' travails. Jupiter makes no such speech to his child in *Punica* 1;²⁸ this scene, however, is 'replaced' by Hamilcar's interaction with his child, Hannibal. This father's view of Rome is fundamentally hostile: *gens recidiua Phrygum Cadmeae stirpis alumnos / foederibus non aequa premit* (1.106–7). The strife between Carthage and Rome is presented as another Trojan War, in which the Romans are associated with their Trojan ancestors (*Phrygum*) and the Carthaginians connected to the Greeks through their shared ancestor Cadmus (*Cadmeae stirpis*).²⁹ The portrayal of the Second Punic

²⁷ See the perceptive discussion of Hannibal and his ancestors in Bernstein (2008) 135–39, also in this volume (379–81).

²⁸ This Virgilian scene is more fully adapted at *Pun.* 3.571–629, where Venus and Jupiter speak about the future of Rome, culminating in the revelation of Scipio's rise and of the Flavian age. For varying interpretations of what the references to Scipio and the Flavians mean here, see, e.g., Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2504 and Marks (2005a) 211–17 with notes.

²⁹ The Carthaginians are called "Cadmean" because the hero Cadmus, the founder of Thebes, hailed from Tyre, Dido's city of origin. Note also how the words *Phrygum*

War as another Trojan War is further suggested by the use of *recidua*, an adjective found first in the *Aeneid*, where it occurs three times, in each instance modifying *Pergama* (*Aen.* 4.344, 7.322, 10.58).³⁰ The word thus suggestively recalls Aeneas and Troy. Hamilcar does not predict a glorious future for Rome but sees Rome as a repetition of Troy, an enemy city that must be destroyed. Thus instead of a scene that shows the limits of Juno's wrath (as the exchange between Jupiter and Venus does in *Aen.* 1), we find an episode of equal importance for understanding Hannibal's war, one that promotes the vengeful desires of Juno and Dido.³¹ Again, the recurrence of the past in the present defines the Carthaginian outlook.

The oath itself then follows, and it takes on special force precisely because it relies on Dido's power:

Romanos terra atque undis, ubi competet aetas,
ferro ignique sequar Rhoeteaque fata reuoluam.
non superi mihi, non Martem cohibentia pacta,
non celsae obstiterint Alpes Tarpeiaque saxa.
hanc mentem iuro nostri per numina Martis,
per manes, regina, tuos. (*Pun.* 1.114–19)

When I am old enough, I shall go after the Romans with sword and fire, on land and sea, and I shall repeat the Trojan fates. The gods above shall not hinder me, not pacts that suppress war, not the high Alps, not the Tarpeian rocks. I swear this intention by the power of our Mars, and by your shade, Queen Dido.

In this way, Silius' Hannibal, a child roughly nine years of age, vows at Dido's temple and in the presence of his father Hamilcar to fight the Romans. In having his son take this oath, Hamilcar passes on not only his hatred of the Romans but also Dido's call for revenge.³²

and *Cadmeae* in 1.106 are juxtaposed as the Romans and Carthaginians are in the poem.

³⁰ Interestingly in the first instance (*Aen.* 4.344) it appears in a conditional sentence, in which Aeneas speaks of his desire to rebuild Troy; in the second (*Aen.* 7.322) Juno uses it to refer to the war that she is about to foment in Italy for Aeneas; in the third (*Aen.* 10.58), Venus complains to Jupiter about Aeneas' so far unfulfilled hope of founding a new Troy.

³¹ Like the explanation of Juno's anger, it provides a context for understanding the *Punica*, explaining Hannibal's drive to destroy Rome. Like Seneca's Tantalus, or Statius' Oedipus, Hamilcar calls on his son to be an object of horror to the Romans (*Pun.* 1.110–11).

³² Hardie (1993a) 96. Hannibal will also want his own son, when he is older, to swear an oath against Rome at Dido's altar, as we learn at 3.81–86. See also 4.814–17 and Augoustakis (2008) 65–66.

Indeed Hannibal's words *ferro ignique sequar* at 115 echo Dido's words as she calls for an avenger (i.e., Hannibal) at *Aeneid* 4.626: *qui face Dardanios ferroque sequare colonos*.³³ Hannibal's cause is allusively presented as a continuation of Dido's hatred of Rome and revenge not only for his father but also for Dido. Hannibal is caught in a familial and mythological web of connections.

The overarching significance of Hannibal's oath is also suggested by the way it is decontextualized from its historical setting. In Polybius, Livy, and Nepos, the oath takes place as Hamilcar prepares for a military expedition in Spain.³⁴ Silius leaves out this detail and thus extracts the oath from its historical circumstance. By doing so, he elevates it to an even more general level for understanding Hannibal's character, thereby suggesting that its importance transcends a specific historical event. It becomes as defining a moment for Punic civilization as was Dido's curse, and attains an almost mythic status.³⁵

Hannibal's hatred of Rome is thus over-determined. On the human level, he enacts the revenge of his ancestor Dido and fulfills the wishes of his father. These motivations are aligned on the divine level with Juno's decision to make Hannibal her stand-in, the embodiment of her hatred of Rome, the goddess' hand-selected human surrogate to carry out her will. Her alliance with Hannibal is described thus:

Iamque deae cunctas sibi belliger induit iras
Hannibal: hunc audet solum componere fatis. (*Pun.* 1.38–39)

Now war-waging Hannibal puts on himself all the wrath of the goddess;
she dares to set him alone against the fates.

The use of *componere* is particularly resonant. It means "set against,"³⁶ in that Juno uses Hannibal as someone to resist fate, which necessitates the ultimate destruction of her favorite city Carthage. However, the verb can also mean "compose,"³⁷ and perhaps traces of this sense

³³ Feeney (1982) *ad loc.*

³⁴ Plb. 3.11.5, Liv. 21.1.4, and Nep. *Han.* 2.3.

³⁵ Indeed, though it is not given a context and witnesses are not described, the oath is understood by others to be an important motivating factor for Hannibal. For example, at the meeting of the Carthaginian senate at 2.349–52, Gestar, part of the pro-Barcid/Hannibalic faction, refers to the oath, Rome's connection to Troy, and Hannibal's military excellence. Cf. also 11.145 and 13.744–46.

³⁶ Feeney (1982) *ad loc.* notes that the verb is used to match contestants in gladiatorial bouts.

³⁷ *OLD* s.v. *compono* 8.

can also be felt. What Juno is setting in motion is another epic. She envisages the Second Punic War as a continuation of the Trojan War (1.42–44), as Hamilcar also does (1.106–7), thereby establishing Hannibal still more firmly as a figure carrying on a past tradition of poetry and war. She offers Hannibal as a hero who eventually avenges Dido's death and resists Rome's fate, and she initiates an epic that would fulfill her desire to see the suffering of the Romans, not their ultimate triumph. In some sense she wants an alternate version of the *Aeneid*. Indeed, Juno's hope that Carthage would last forever (*aeternam condere gentem*, 1.28) recalls *Aeneid* 1.33 (*Romanam condere gentem*), which looks ultimately to the future greatness of Rome. Carthage was to be Juno's Rome, a city that would prefer her over all the gods, a nation that she wanted to last forever. The *Aeneid*, fate, and of course history show that this dominant and everlasting city was to be Rome. The *Punica*, however, presents the goddess' unavoidably vain attempt to make an epic of her favorite city, an '*Aeneid*' that would celebrate Hannibal's greatness and that of Carthage. Hannibal becomes her epic's hero; he is a compelling villain, representative of the Carthaginian military threat.³⁸

Juno, however, can only be partially successful, because her desires are ultimately limited by fate and history. This is already suggested in the futility implied in the phrase *componere fatis* (1.39), and is implicitly acknowledged in other ways in these opening scenes. Juno ends her speech by providing a preview of the suffering that Hannibal will bring the Romans (1.45–54), events that only go as far as the Romans' disastrous defeat at Cannae in the third year of the war with Carthage in 216 BC. The preview itself resonates with the gruesome prophecy of civil war at the end of Lucan 1 (673–95), thereby connecting the two historical epics, but once again the contrast between them helps to emphasize the mythological causation that lies behind Silius' war but that has been largely omitted from Lucan's approach. In similar fashion, Hannibal's oath is followed by a priestess' prophecy (1.125–37) that foresees the coming successes

³⁸ Cf. Pomeroy (2000) 152. Pomeroy (2000, 160) observes: "The hero of the *Punica* is an Aeneas, but the Aeneas of the losing side, an *impius heros*, and his actions represent a reversal of traditional Roman values." On the question of who should be viewed as the hero of the *Punica*, see Marks (2005a) 61–67 (with bibliographical references) and Tipping in this volume (193–218).

of Hannibal, culminating and ending with the battle of Cannae. Juno does not allow the priestess to go any further.

The opening of the *Punica* thus significantly ties Hannibal's heroic greatness to his connection with Juno and Dido, to the divine and mythological levels. As a result he differs from any other Carthaginian character in the epic. Just as Homeric and Virgilian heroes are born of gods or associated with supernatural powers that increase their greatness,³⁹ so Hannibal's connection with Dido and Juno distinguishes him, making the story of the Second Punic War about more than the war itself; it is also about his and its participation in a larger swath of myth and divine conflict.

But while these associations set Hannibal apart, they also doom him. He is implicated in the same destructive dynamic that brought about the downfall of Dido in the *Aeneid*. That is, in presenting his epic as a kind of continuation of the *Aeneid*, Silius has taken over one of its defining components, Juno's angry opposition to Rome. It is a resentment that cannot ultimately be fulfilled because Rome's rise to empire and defeat of Carthage are fated.⁴⁰ Hannibal is thus placed in a position bearing similarities to that of Dido (and later Turnus) in the *Aeneid*.⁴¹ He also will show greatness and will be implicated in Juno's desire to satisfy her wrath, but ultimately she will shield him from the realities of fate and thus knowledge of his inevitable defeat. Silius' Hannibal is defined by these mythological and literary connections that will both motivate and limit his actions throughout the epic. By taking up Dido's curse⁴² and Juno's hatred, he is replaying a role from the *Aeneid* that cannot succeed.

³⁹ It should be noted, however, that there are other characters granted divine ancestry, especially on the Roman side; see Wilson (1993) 221. Wilson (1993, 224–25) also notes the numerous divine or supernatural characters that Hannibal is likened to, including Hercules and the Giants (228).

⁴⁰ Cf. von Albrecht (1964) 48.

⁴¹ Keith (2000) 92 writes: "As the avatar of both Juno and Dido, Silius' Hannibal is endowed with the transgressive force of the militaristic Virgilian female and simultaneously marked from the outset as the loser in the new epic struggle with Rome, on the model of Juno, Dido, Amata, and the recurrent female opposition to the proto-Roman mission of the *Aeneid*."

⁴² For Hannibal as a "continuator" of Dido and Hamilcar's hatred for Rome, see Marks (2005a) 90 n. 75.

2. *Dido and Hannibal's shield*

The story of Dido's life, suicide, and call for revenge is told in greater detail in the second book. There Hannibal, in the midst of his siege of Saguntum, receives a shield from local tribes in Spain (*Oceani gentes*, 2.396). At 2.406–52, Silius describes the shield, which consists of four main sections: the right side, by far the longest portion of the passage, focuses on Dido and the Barcids (2.406–31); the left side has scenes from Carthaginian history and pastoral life (2.432–45); the center shows the battle of Saguntum (2.446–48); and the rim depicts the crossing of the river Ebro (2.449–52).⁴³ The shield is an artistic tribute to Hannibal; its elaborate description is an ekphrasis (a description of art in poetry) that echoes the representation of the armor received by Achilles in *Iliad* 18 and by Aeneas in *Aeneid* 8.⁴⁴ In this section, I will concentrate on the right side of the shield, but I will show that the ekphrasis as a whole offers a revealing, mortal perspective on Hannibal's world, one that is rooted in the experiences of Dido. The shield may be presented to Hannibal as an emblem of his heroic greatness and his role in Carthaginian history; however, it ultimately points to the problematic nature of his aspirations of defeating Rome.⁴⁵

The first images described on the right side of the shield retell Dido's story (2.406–25). We see the foundation of Carthage (2.406–11), Aeneas' shipwreck there and reception by Dido (2.412–15), the consummation of their love affair in a cave (2.416–19), Aeneas' departure (2.420–21), and Dido's death on the pyre as Aeneas sails away (2.422–25). In general, Dido is characterized much as she had been in *Aeneid* 1 and 4, and indeed the connections are fundamental for Silius. She appears initially as a grand and noble ruler (*regina serena*, 2.414), though she is marked out as *infelix* (2.415); the shield shows her

⁴³ A diagram of the shield can be found in Küppers (1986) 161. For the programmatic significance of Silius' treatment of the siege of Saguntum in *Punica* 1–2, see especially Dominik (2003).

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Jühnke (1972) 191–92 and Küppers (1986) 156–57. Harrison in this volume discusses extensively the function of the shield's ekphrasis proleptically (282–85). For a discussion of Aeneas' shield and its Homeric model, see especially Putnam (1998) 119–88.

⁴⁵ For discussion of Hannibal's shield, see von Albrecht (1964) 173–77, Vessey (1975), Kißel (1979) 185–92, Laudizi (1989) 107–12, Küppers (1986) 154–64, Venini (1991), Devallet (1992), and Campus (2003).

gradual fall from power, culminating in her suicide and call for revenge (2.422–23). In some ways Silius heightens the nature of her downfall. The description of Aeneas as he first meets Dido is one of a more desperate figure than in *Aeneid* 1, where he has been made godlike by Venus (*Aen.* 1.589). This change has two important effects: first, by emphasizing Aeneas' dire condition, the shield suggests the graciousness and *hospitium* of Dido in receiving him; second, as in Ovid's brief version of Aeneas' stopover in Carthage at *Metamorphoses* 14.75–81, it eliminates divine agency from Aeneas' predicament. Indeed throughout the passage, we do not see any direct role played by the gods on Aeneas' behalf.⁴⁶

Dido's call for an avenger from among the future Carthaginians (*saucia Dido / mandabat Tyriis ultricia bella futuris*, 422–23) looks back to her famous curse at *Aeneid* 4.622–29. And just as in the *Aeneid*, Hannibal is understood by the reader as the *ultor* to whom she refers, so in the next scene on the shield Hannibal is shown swearing his oath against Rome at Dido's temple:

parte alia supplex infernis Hannibal aris
arcanum Stygia libat cum uate cruorem
et primo bella Aeneadum iurabat ab aeuo. (Pun. 2.426–28)

On another part of the shield, suppliant Hannibal, assisted by a Stygian priest, pours a libation of secret blood at altars to the infernal gods, and from his first youth swears war against Aeneas' sons.

Once again Dido's curse is presented as a defining moment for understanding Hannibal. The reference to the altars (*infernis...aris*, 2.426) are those at Dido's temple, as we know from 1.91–92, and the phrase *bella Aeneadum* (2.428) casts the Romans as the descendants of Aeneas, thereby making still more explicit Hannibal's role as Dido's *ultor*. Moreover, just as in the oath scene of book 1, Hamilcar plays an important role here as well, for he appears next on the shield:

at senior Siculis exsultat Hamilcar in aruis;
spirantem credas certamina anhela mouere;
ardor inest oculis, toruumque minatur imago. (Pun. 2.429–31)

⁴⁶ The Silian passage does end with a reference to Aeneas' pursuit of his fate: *magnis...fatis* (425). It is unclear, however, from whose perspective this detail is to be focalized.

And there old Hamilcar exults in the fields of Sicily; you would think him living, inciting breathless fights; there is burning in his eyes, and his image threatens fiercely.

Hamilcar is depicted as a great soldier, at a seemingly exultant moment during the First Punic War (*Siculis... in aruis*),⁴⁷ and his placement on the shield strongly connects him with Dido's revenge and Hannibal's role as her *ultor*.

The right side of the shield provides an understanding of Carthage's strife with Rome that focuses on three figures: Dido, Hamilcar, and Hannibal. What results is a Hannibalic interpretation of Punic history, one that shares something in common with various prophetic speeches in the *Aeneid*, where we find a conception of Roman history as based particularly on three figures—Aeneas, Romulus, and Augustus, all three in some sense founders of Rome.⁴⁸ The three figures in Silius are also thematically connected, not in their creations of ever greater versions of an original city (as in Virgil), but in their seeming desire to achieve Dido's revenge against Aeneas and Rome. At the same time, these figures are depicted at significant moments that convey the threat they pose to Rome: Dido, as she calls for revenge; Hannibal, as he swears his oath against Rome; Hamilcar, as he rampages in the First Punic War.⁴⁹

The remaining three sections of the shield are described at much shorter length, though they interact in important ways with the preceding representations of Dido. The left side of the shield (2.432–45) contains Carthaginian scenes of victory from the First Punic War⁵⁰ (including the torture of the Roman general Regulus)⁵¹ and a vignette from Carthaginian life. The siege of Saguntum stands at the shield's

⁴⁷ Küppers (1986) 158.

⁴⁸ Most importantly, Jupiter's speech at *Aen.* 1.257–96 and Anchises' at *Aen.* 6.756–807.

⁴⁹ In the concluding vignette concerning Hamilcar, note the use of the potential subjunctive *credas* that would have the reader even more directly imagine the threat that Hamilcar posed. For the use of the second person in ekphrastic contexts, see Manolaraki in this volume (310).

⁵⁰ The scenes from the First Punic War are perhaps paralleled on Achilles' shield by the images of cities at war and at peace; the Saguntum scene, by Actium on Aeneas'. Cf. Juhnke (1972) 191–92.

⁵¹ The story of Regulus is usually taken as an exemplary tale of his *fides*. Thus, from the perspective of Silius' Roman audience, it reflects ill on Hannibal, who is more a figure of *perfidia*. See, e.g., Albrecht (1964) 175, Vessey (1975) 402–3, and Küppers (1986) 159–60. For a reappraisal of Regulus in the *Punica*, see Augoustakis (2006).

center (2.446–48). Finally, the rim depicts the river Ebro, the boundary that Hannibal ultimately crosses:

extrema clipei stagnabat Hiberus in ora
 curuatis claudens ingentem flexibus orbem.
 Hannibal abrupto transgressus foedere ripas
 Poenorum populos Romana in bella uocabat. (*Pun.* 2.449–52)

On the outermost edge of the shield, the Ebro river was flowing, enclosing the huge orb with its curving bends. Having crossed the banks, with the treaty torn apart, Hannibal was calling the peoples of the Phoenicians to fight Rome.

The ekphrasis thus closes by bringing together the greatness and goals of Hannibal: by taking up the role of Dido's avenger, by pledging *bella Aeneadum* (428) as a youth, and by inciting *Romana bella* (452) at Saguntum, he will avenge Dido, his father, and his people.

The shield's worldview is Dido-centered and thus backward looking. Past wrongs impinge on and shape the Carthaginian present. This intermingling of past and present increases the greatness of Hannibal, and conceives of the siege of Saguntum as a kind of culminating moment in achieving Dido's revenge against Rome. Carthaginian history is presented as moving in a direct arc from Dido to Hannibal, painting him as an almost mythic figure.

At the same time, however, that view of Hannibal and history is limited. The shield, on the literary level, ultimately looks back to Achilles' armor in *Iliad* 18 and Aeneas' in *Aeneid* 8.⁵² But unlike these shields, both of which were forged by a god (Hephaestus/Vulcan) and bestowed by goddesses (Thetis and Venus), Hannibal's is humanly created and offered by local Spanish tribes. His shield can thus only provide an understanding of Carthage and of Hannibal's place in history from a mortal perspective,⁵³ one limited by its inability to include the future and workings of fate.⁵⁴ While Virgil's shield constructs a view of Rome that ultimately looks forward to the greatness of Rome under

⁵² Moreover, while Achilles' shield describes the general workings of the cosmos and life, and Virgil's the future of the Roman state, Hannibal's shield is concerned with the present and, more importantly, with the losses or wrongs committed against Carthage in the past.

⁵³ Cf. Küppers (1985) 157.

⁵⁴ See, e.g., Pomeroy (2000) 157 and similarly Harrison in this volume (284–85). This is true perhaps both because of human inability to see the future and because even if they had such knowledge, they could not reveal it on this particular shield, as it is a tribute to Hannibal.

Augustus, culminating in his victory at Actium, Silius' shield does not even indicate the fall of Saguntum but rather stops with a description of the siege that is actually in process. Unlike Aeneas' shield, which anticipates the Augustan age, Hannibal's seeks not to reach new heights of greatness but to avenge past wrongs.

The limits on Hannibal and Carthage are also suggested by the presentation of the Ebro river, which forms the shield's border. This feature resonates with Achilles' shield, which is surrounded by Ocean (*Il.* 18.607–8; cf. *Oceani gentes*, *Pun.* 2.396). In the Homeric scene, the depiction of Ocean is often interpreted as placing Achilles and his predicament within the larger workings of the cosmos.⁵⁵ In Silius, however, the significance of the shield's border is again in the *hic et nunc*. The Ebro is the boundary in Spain between Carthaginian and Roman spheres of influence. On the one hand, the shield thus provides a mortal view of present events that defines the Ebro as the physical boundary that is in effect being contested by Hannibal's siege;⁵⁶ his ultimate crossing of this river can be read as a testament to his heroism. On the other hand, it encapsulates the way that Rome constrains his existence. The Ebro is a physical boundary imposed on Carthaginian growth by Rome. In the Ebro treaty of 226 BC, Carthage agreed not to cross the river.⁵⁷ The view of Hannibal, Carthage, and Dido offered on the shield is thus defined not only by its inability to foresee Carthaginian ascendancy, but also by the limitations imposed by the Roman state. That is, the shield (and thus Hannibal's world) is surrounded by Roman domination.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, Hannibal is enormously pleased with the shield and armor as soon as he sees them:

⁵⁵ See von Albrecht (1964) 173 and Küppers (1986) 162.

⁵⁶ Cf. Küppers (1986) 162.

⁵⁷ On the details of the treaty, see Briscoe (1989) 44–45.

⁵⁸ The inclusion of the Ebro scene also shows Hannibal breaking a treaty (*abrupto foedere*, 2.451) by crossing the river (see von Albrecht [1964] 175). He thus represents (from the Roman perspective) the treacherous nature of the Carthaginians. Küppers (1986) 163 suggests that, by being shown crossing the Ebro, Hannibal displays his moral inferiority. In this respect, the examples of Regulus and Saguntum on the shield play against Hannibal: both are symbols of *fides*, who honor their political allegiances and treaties. It should also be noted that treachery is prominently shown punished on Aeneas' shield (see Pomeroy [2000] 157). Yet, at the same time, Hannibal is portrayed fulfilling Dido's prayer that there be no treaties among her ancestors and those of the Trojans (*Aen.* 4.624).

...per singula laetis
 lustrat ouans oculis †gaudetque origine regni†: (Pun. 2.404–5)
 ...he joyfully examines with happy eyes each detail †and rejoices in the
 origin of Carthage†.⁵⁹

His reaction echoes two of Aeneas' responses to art in Virgil's epic. First, as Aeneas gazes the pictures in Dido's temple, he is described thus:

namque sub ingenti lustrat dum singula templo
 reginam opperiens... (Aen. 1.453–54)
 For while he awaits the queen, under the huge temple he examines each
 scene...

Aeneas' viewing of the art is then related, but his reaction has given critics pause, since he seemingly takes comfort in scenes that show the terrible defeat of the Trojans by the Greeks. Hannibal has more to rejoice over, since the shield ultimately suggests at least short-term Carthaginian success, and rousing connects him with Dido and his heroic father.⁶⁰ At the same time, Hannibal's reaction also resonates with Aeneas' reactions both when he receives his armor from Venus:

ille deae donis et tanto laetus honore
 experi nequit atque oculos per singula uoluit,
 miraturque... (Aen. 8.617–19)
 Happy with the gifts of the goddess and with such a great honor, he is
 not able to take his fill, as he turns his eyes across each piece of armor,
 and marvels...

and later when he actually picks up his shield (after it has been described):

Talia per clipeum Volcani, dona parentis,
 miratur rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet
 attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum. (Aen. 8.729–31)

⁵⁹ It should be noted that Delz puts the phrase *gaudetque origine regni* in *crucis* because it reflects only a part of the ekphrasis' content.

⁶⁰ There may also be irony, for as Aeneas views the artwork, we are told that he is awaiting Dido (*reginam opperiens*, Aen. 1.454), who is building the city they have stumbled upon. In the Silian scene, the line is followed by the description of the shield, which begins with Dido's founding of Carthage.

He marvels at such things on Vulcan's shield, the gift of his mother, and though ignorant of the events, he rejoices in their depiction, raising on his shoulder the fame and the fates of his descendants.

Aeneas does not understand everything that he views, and cannot, because the shield describes future events, ones that he will not even live to witness. Hannibal, by contrast, understands and rejoices in everything on the shield, because he sees events that are already known and meaningful to him. This limited worldview is, as we have already seen, characteristic of Hannibal's heroism throughout the epic. Though his greatness is clear, he acts out of an ignorance of a future that, in the end, can bring him no solace. In this respect Silius' substitution of *origine* (*Pun.* 2.405) for Virgil's *imagine* (*Aen.* 8.730) is resonant. Hannibal's heroism is based upon his respect and vengeance for Dido and the past, his concentration on the city's origins, and the war's cause in Dido's curse; Aeneas' strives for the future depicted on the shield (*rerum...imagine*) because it somehow involves greatness for his descendants.

The constrained nature of Hannibal's heroism and of his, what we might call, tragic ignorance is re-emphasized when he reacts a second time to the shield after the ekphrasis by threatening the Romans (*heu quantum Ausonio sudabitis, arma, cruore! / quas...poenas mihi, Curia, pendes!* "how much you will drip in Roman blood, my arms! What penalties...you, Curia, will pay to me!" *Pun.* 2.455–56). Hannibal takes up the shield (*tegmina...aptat*, 2.453–54) and thus bears the burden of his country, just as Aeneas does at *Aeneid* 8.731. Hannibal's boastful exclamation at 2.455–56, however, provides an ironic contrast with another passage from *Aeneid* 8. While Aeneas is finalizing his alliance with Evander, a divine portent appears which Aeneas correctly interprets as meaning that the Italian war is about to start and that his mother Venus is about to bring him the divinely wrought armor that she had earlier promised. He thus exclaims:

heu quantae miseris caedes Laurentibus instant!
 quas poenas mihi, Turne, dabis! (*Aen.* 8.537–38)

Alas, what great slaughter looms over the wretched Laurentines! What great penalties you, Turnus, will pay to me!

The contrast between the Virgilian and Silian scenes is important. Hannibal's words allusively recall Aeneas', and indeed the Carthaginian general will achieve great success in the short term. Aeneas' response, however, is based upon a greater (though still incomplete) understand-

ing of fate and his descendants' world domination; Hannibal's words, by contrast, underscore the tragic ignorance of what his war and the shield ultimately mean. In the end, the shield depicts Hannibal's defining position in a mythologized presentation of Carthaginian history, but it also contains the seeds of his downfall because of the reality of Roman domination.

3. *Hannibal and Anna*

Silius' boldest incorporation of the Dido myth occurs in book 8. Hannibal is downcast about the success of Fabius' delaying strategy (8.11–15): his supply lines are being disrupted; his Gallic allies are restless and think of returning home (8.16–20). In addition, his political opposition in Carthage, led by Hanno, has prevented reinforcements from being sent (8.21–24). At this low point, Juno intervenes to reinvigorate Hannibal's slumping spirits. She orders Dido's sister Anna, now an Italian nymph, to incite Hannibal to fight at Cannae (8.25–43). After Silius provides a lengthy explanation of the origin of Anna's worship in Italy (8.44–201), Anna does her bidding by rousing Hannibal to call his troops to battle (8.202–41). The scene, which interacts especially with the *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Fasti*, develops many of the themes raised in the earlier Dido-related episodes but brings them to bear directly on a major battle. In this section, I will examine how the Anna episode conveys the problematic nature of Juno and Dido's roles as instigators of Hannibal's victory at Cannae and show how Silius' treatment of the battle more generally enacts the ultimate limits of his heroism.⁶¹

That Juno and Anna play such central roles in motivating Hannibal to fight a well-known historical battle is startling. Once again we see the extent to which historical and military causes are characteristically trumped in Silius by divine and mythological motivations. In this case the poetic model is one of the most famous in Virgil. By using an intermediary to prod Hannibal to battle, Juno echoes her actions in *Aeneid* 7, where she elicits the assistance of the Fury Allecto

⁶¹ For discussions of this episode, see Santini (1991) 5–62 and Dietrich (2004) 2–7. See also in this volume Ariemma (241–47) and Keith's analysis from the perspective of orientalism (365–66).

to start the war in Italy.⁶² Juno's effective precipitation of the battle of Cannae underscores her continuing role as a poet figure, who uses her wrath and fury to create actions that she desires and that become the building blocks of the *Punica*.⁶³ Cannae is the bloodbath Juno desired when she infected Hannibal in book 1, and the victory she anticipates early in the eighth book (*praescia Cannarum Iuno atque elata futuris*, "Juno, foreseeing Cannae and elated by the events to come," 8.27).⁶⁴ The devastation wrought against Rome in this battle is Juno's ultimate goal in instigating the war. Just like the brothers' duel in Statius' *Thebaid* 11, or the battle at Pharsalus in Lucan's *De bello civili* 7, Cannae is the horrific moment for which Juno—and the poem—are always striving.

And by using Anna to motivate Hannibal, Silius places the battle of Cannae directly within the context of Dido's story, figuring this momentous battle as the fulfillment of Dido's curse, and making Hannibal the *ultor* for whom the Punic queen had called (*Aen.* 4.625–26). Silius can do so because of the connection of Anna to Italy already present in the Roman literary and religious traditions. Anna Perenna, a goddess worshipped in Italy, was claimed by some to be Dido's sister Anna. Ovid tells this story at *Fasti* 3.523–656, and Silius exploits this connection by tying Cannae to the thematic significance he places on Dido for Hannibal throughout the *Punica*. At the same time, however, Silius has interestingly modified the nature of Dido's influence as it appears elsewhere: instead of Dido's ancient call for revenge inspiring Hannibal, it now motivates Anna, long after her sister's death, to take direct action. The distinction between Dido's past world and Hannibal's present is in a sense obliterated. The Carthaginian/Trojan past impinges on the present in a new and decisive way.

The connection between past and present is made clear from the start and places Anna in a strange position. Juno begins her speech to

⁶² Her actions also resemble her use of the Fury Tisiphone to rout Fides in *Pun.* 2.526–649. See the discussion in Dominik (2006) 117–19.

⁶³ This episode also speaks to Hannibal's extraordinary status in the poem. He again can be seen to operate on a supernatural/divine level in a way that other Carthaginians (and most Romans) do not. This sets him apart and raises him to a truly heroic (and traditionally) epic level that extends beyond his own natural military prowess.

⁶⁴ In having her incite Hannibal, Juno refers to the fates (*fatīs*, 36; cf. also *fata*, 38), yet she does not reveal anything to Anna that occurs after Hannibal's victory at the battle of Cannae.

Anna by emphasizing Hannibal's blood relationship to her through a common ancestor named Belus (*sanguine cognato... a uestro... Belo*, 8.30–31).⁶⁵ Anna is thus a relative of Hannibal, but she is now also an Italian goddess, one who has been long accustomed to Roman domination. In some sense, Anna is forced by Juno to 'betray' the Romans, in whose land she resides, and thus may be seen to represent the duplicitousness of the Carthaginians that is incited, at least in part, by Juno—for it is Juno who motivates Hannibal to break the treaty with Rome and start the Second Punic War, as we have seen, and it is Juno here who forces Anna to act against the Romans.

Silius points to Anna's paradoxical status (8.44–49) and offers an aetiology to explain how she came to be worshipped at Rome (8.50–201). This explanation contains an understanding of Aeneas' relationship with Dido that differs in important ways from the one in Virgil.⁶⁶ For example, it starts with potential criticism of Aeneas' treatment of Dido (*Iliaco postquam deserta est hospite Dido*, "after Dido was deserted by her Trojan guest," 8.50), and, in referring to her suicide, it offers an explicit interpretation of Dido and Aeneas' relationship as one of marriage, something that the *Aeneid* leaves purposefully ambiguous: *tum corripit ensem / certa necis, profugi donum exitiale mariti* ("then, fixed on death, she seizes the sword, the deadly gift of her fugitive husband," 8.52–53).⁶⁷ The word *mariti* makes it clear that Aeneas is her husband, a detail that Ovid had also included (*Met.* 14.79). Silius seemingly throws a few more barbs. Instead of being *fato profugus* (*Aen.* 1.2), Silius' Aeneas is pointedly described here as *profugus maritus*, a "fleeing husband." Moreover, Silius underscores that Dido dies by Aeneas' sword, which was a *donum exitiale*. In all this, there is no mention of the gods and fate mandating his departure, thus depriving him of the defense he relies on in the *Aeneid*, and which, we shall see, he will attempt in a speech later in this episode. In Silius' version, greater responsibility for Dido's fall is implicitly attributed to Aeneas, and the argument is made possible that Aeneas (deprived of his fate-based defense) is faithless, a proto-Roman who lacks *fides*.

⁶⁵ Santini (1991) 28–29.

⁶⁶ It should be noted that Servius *ad Aen.* 4.682 mentions a version of Aeneas' story that has Anna (not Dido) commit suicide over her love for the Trojan hero. See, e.g., Santini (1991) 34 and Dietrich (2004) 6 n. 24.

⁶⁷ Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2499.

Juno's intervention thus results in a retelling of the Dido and Aeneas story that suggests more criticism for Aeneas than is present in Virgil's epic. In her zeal to create a Carthaginian '*Aeneid*', focused on the harm Hannibal causes Rome, Juno has thus also brought about a more pro-Carthaginian version of the affair between Dido and Aeneas, one that heightens the sense of Aeneas' *perfidia*, and by implication the justice of Dido's call for revenge. This suggestion is reinforced later in the episode when Anna reports what Dido said just before her suicide. At 8.146–47, Dido implicitly rebukes Aeneas for his inconstancy by referring to Sychaeus who (she hopes) will receive her lovingly in the underworld (as he in fact does at *Aen.* 6.472–74 and as is suggested by his depiction on Dido's altar at *Pun.* 1.90). Anna then goes on to describe the sword with which Dido kills herself (mentioned earlier at 8.54) as *ensem Dardanii quaesitum in pignus amoris* ("the sword sought after as a pledge of love," 8.149).⁶⁸ Implicitly, then, Aeneas' *pignus* ultimately does not amount to much.⁶⁹ In Anna's reconstruction of Dido's tale, neither sister attempts to explain away Aeneas' departure as required by the fates or the gods. In fact, when Silius' Aeneas himself claims that the gods necessitated his departure, he gives a version that is a bit at variance with the *Aeneid* in ways that would seemingly attempt to lessen his potential culpability. He explains his departure to Anna thus:

respiciens aegerque animi tum regna reliqui
 uestra, nec abscessem thalamo, ni magna minatus
 meque sua ratibus dextra imposuisset et alto
 egisset rapidis classem Cyllenius Euris. (*Pun.* 8.108–11)

Looking back and sick at heart, I then left behind your kingdom; nor would I have departed from our marriage chamber, if the Cyllenian god

⁶⁸ Lines 8.144–223, from the description of Dido's death to Anna's warning to Hannibal, represent a difficult textual problem. This passage does not appear in any of the MSS but is printed first in the Aldine edition of 1523. See Volpilliac-Lenthéric, Miniconi, and Devallet (1981), 125–127 and Ariemma (2000a), 67–68 for detailed discussion. Most scholars consider these lines to be authentic; see, e.g., Santini (1991) 54–56, as well as Brugnoli and Santini (1995). However, it must be stated that we cannot be sure, and any conclusions from this passage must be tentative. Nonetheless the passage is interesting because of the partially negative light in which it, and Anna in particular, potentially cast Aeneas (even as she is trying to win his favor). This is in itself intriguing, since, as Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2497 n.6 write: "It is curious that the only other lengthy *lacuna* postulated in a Latin, heroic text (*Aeneid* 2.567–88), also shows Aeneas in a 'bad' light. The negative view of Aeneas expressed in both the Silius and the Virgil passage may have led to their excision."

⁶⁹ Cf. Virgil's Dido in *Aen.* 4.541–42.

had not threatened me strongly, and placed me with his own right hand on my ship and driven my fleet on the deep sea with quick winds.

But here Aeneas attributes to the god Mercury (*Cyllenius*, 8.111) a much more direct role in his departure from Dido and Carthage than the Virgilian god had played. The resulting discrepancy between Virgil's version and the experiences of Silius' Dido and Anna may render Aeneas' assertion questionable. In the *Aeneid*, Mercury must warn Aeneas twice to leave, but he does not physically lead Aeneas to his fleet and make him set sail, as Silius' Aeneas claims. What Silius' Anna tells us about Aeneas is thus potentially ambivalent. Moreover, we learn that Anna, though initially received graciously by Aeneas, ultimately flees after the appearance of Dido's ghost warning her to do so because of the violence of Aeneas' wife Lavinia (8.168–83): Aeneas' realm, from the Carthaginian perspective, represents treachery, exactly what Dido embodies from the Trojan perspective in the *Aeneid*. Dido's ghost plays Mercury's role from *Aeneid* 4. The tables have been turned.

But even though these contrasts with Virgil may suggest a more ambivalent view of Aeneas and thus a more sympathetic view of Dido, they do nothing to help Hannibal in the long run. After this flashback is completed, we are returned to the dramatic situation that had been put on hold since line 43, Juno's summoning of Anna to rouse Hannibal to fight at Cannae. Having given Anna her orders, Juno returns to the heavens, happy that she is about to drink (Latin) blood (*optatum Latii tandem potura cruorem*, 8.204), a characteristic attributed to Hannibal after he had been infected by Juno (*penitusque medullis / sanguinis humani flagrat sis*), "a thirst for human blood burns deep in his marrow," 1.59–60); again, he is a perfect representative of the goddess. Anna then acts quickly to incite Hannibal (8.205–25). She claims that divine favor has returned to the Carthaginians (8.213–14), reveals that the formidable Roman general Fabius has been replaced by the impetuous Varro (8.216–18), and that she herself has been sent by Juno (219–20). Finally Anna stresses their common ancestry in Belus (8.221), and then directs him to fight at Cannae (223–24). Hannibal promptly obeys (8.226–41).

The ensuing battle of Cannae occupies the *Punica* until 10.325. Its outcome reveals both the strength and weakness of Juno's intervention, and thus also of Hannibal's heroism. Juno achieves the bloody victory she desired, but she can go no further. Hannibal, however,

desires to march on the Roman Capitol itself (10.335–36) and must be stopped by Juno (10.337–71), even though she had inspired this aspiration in him when she roused him to start the Second Punic War, as Silius explains at 1.53–54.⁷⁰ Once again, his heroism is undermined by his ignorance of the gods and the future, an ignorance that is imposed by Juno and that ultimately constrains Hannibal from his full martial potential. As powerful as Dido's revenge is to motivate Hannibal, revenge is not a sufficient force to overcome the power of fate and the reality of Rome's rise. Indeed, once Juno has attained Hannibal's victory at Cannae, Hannibal's heroism gradually flags. He can no longer be the threat he had earlier been.

4. *The tragedy of Hannibal's heroism*

Dido looms over the epic like Oedipus in Statius' *Thebaid* or Tantalus in Seneca's *Thyestes*. She (in conjunction with Juno) makes the *Punica* a poem of ancient revenge; Hannibal is her agent to achieve it.⁷¹ He is a heroic figure who straddles the human and mythological realms through his connections to Dido and the epic past. At the same time, however, these associations also necessitate his downfall.

Hannibal is selected by Juno to initiate a new war, and thus also a new epic, one that can potentially rival the *Aeneid*, one in which Carthage might somehow prevail and create that *gens aeterna* that she had hoped for, but that was seemingly foreclosed by Virgil's epic. These hopes are unattainable for the goddess, as she herself understands, and they place Hannibal, like Dido before him, in an untenable position, for Hannibal also becomes a figure exploited by the manipulations of Juno against fate. This fact defines his character.

Unlike Homer's Achilles, who understands that his pursuit of Hector will bring on his death, or Virgil's Aeneas, who is told the long-term successes of his people, Silius' Hannibal is not allowed to know that Jupiter, fate, and history demand that he lose. His heroism is always circumscribed by this ignorance. As a result, he cannot achieve either the integrations into a larger social and cosmic order (that is implied

⁷⁰ When he attempts to attack Rome in book 12, he is again prevented by Juno, who acts on Jupiter's orders (12.664–730). Cf. Keith (2000) 91.

⁷¹ Note how Scipio also becomes an *ultor* (of his father's and uncle's deaths) by the end of the epic.

for Achilles in Homer) or his place in a glorious national history/narrative that is still unfolding, in which he represents an important point of departure for still increased greatness for his people (as does Aeneas).

Such limitations undo Hannibal. His predicament is glimpsed throughout the epic, since the reader is told (and of course already knows) about the general's eventual defeat and humiliating suicide years later,⁷² but is on full display at the epic's conclusion. As his loss at the battle of Zama becomes ever more apparent to the reader, his spirit has to be diminished for the epic to end.⁷³ Juno achieves this with three remarkable interventions. First, she sends a phantom of Scipio on horseback that leads Hannibal away from the battle to chase after it (17.522–53).⁷⁴ Second, she kills Hannibal's horse to prevent him from riding back to battle (17.553–57). Finally, assuming the guise of a shepherd, she meets Hannibal and claims to give him directions back to the battle of Zama but actually leads him farther away (17.567–80). This final scene has some resonance with Venus' encounter with Aeneas in *Aeneid* 1,⁷⁵ but even more so with the end of the *Iliad*, where Mercury, in human disguise, meets Priam, who is led to Achilles' tent. In the Homeric scene, a full resolution is achieved; Juno's actions at the end of the *Punica*, however, result in the opposite effect. They yank Hannibal from the martial realm and place him in something like the pastoral, strangely separated from the war, from the here and now, misdirecting him out of battle. He briefly becomes a spectator of Zama before he flees with a group of anonymous soldiers (17.597–617). Juno's solution for Hannibal is essentially to remove him from the arena of epic heroism. In the end, the literary and mythological traditions, which have provided so much of his motivation throughout the epic, can help him no more than the reality of the historical record.

Ultimately Hannibal is a tragic hero,⁷⁶ possessed of greatness but also of flaws. A hero who if he had been a Roman, would have certainly led

⁷² See, e.g., 2.704–7 and 13.874–93.

⁷³ Though he will still hope for a future war with Rome (17.606–10).

⁷⁴ This scene is a reworking of *Aen.* 10.633–88, where the goddess similarly leads Turnus from battle with an image of Aeneas, but is only temporarily successful. Cf. also *Il.* 5.449–53, and see Spaltenstein (1990) 478–79.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Aen.* 1.305–401, and see Marks (2005a) 197 n. 87.

⁷⁶ Cf. von Albrecht (1964) 48 and Vessey (1975) 392.

his city to greatness, as Silius suggests at 17.401–5.⁷⁷ Hannibal is admirable for his devotion to honor, family, and state, compelling for his natural ability, horrifying for his violence and treachery. However, he is forced to play from a script whose ending has already been written by fate and the gods but which he was never allowed to see.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ On this important counterfactual, see Cowan's analysis in this volume (323–24).

⁷⁸ As Tipping observes in his treatment of Scipio in this volume, "the shifting figure of Scipio with which the *Punica* ends is also suggestive of the Virgilian and post-Virgilian epic hero's lack of definition, of the difficulty of determining what it meant to be epic hero or Roman or both, and of the ancient epic poet's own endlessly emulative practice" (218).

CHAPTER FIVE

IMITATION AND THE HERO

Elizabeth Kennedy Klaassen

He is too little of a genius... The extreme conscientiousness of his work cannot compensate for his lack of creative power and imagination and of originality, vividness and vivacity.¹

These words from a handbook on the history of Roman literature describe not Silius but Virgil, whose lack of inspiration is proven by his slavish imitation of Homer. Similar judgments have been voiced about Silius, often citing the ancient evaluation of Pliny, in his letter announcing the death of the Flavian poet: *scribebat carmina maiore cura quam ingenio* ("he wrote poems with greater care than talent," *Ep.* 3.7.5).² But imitation is often itself creative, and an important aspect of Silius' *cura* is the creativity with which he has used and transformed his models.

Among Silius' many sources, his historical epic has two parents, and it is often hard to tell which of the two the *Punica* resembles more, Livy's third decade or Virgil's *Aeneid*.³ The storyline of the Second Punic War is based on Livy, but Silius draws his narrative technique from Virgil. Within Silius' epic, various characters assume the role of an Aeneas in different ways at different times. Hannibal is repeatedly shown as an antitype of Aeneas, while Scipio emerges as the main Roman Aeneas. I will first give an overview of this scheme of imitation,

¹ Teuffel (1868–69) 391, quoted by Heinze (1993) xii n. 1.

² See Dominik in this volume on Pliny's judgment and critical response to Silius after Scaliger (431–40). Translations are my own unless otherwise noted; Duff (1934) and West (1990) on Silius and Virgil respectively have been consulted extensively.

³ Both these authors were condemned by Caligula, according to Suetonius: *sed et Virgili ac Titi Livi scripta et imagines paulum afuit quin ex omnibus bibliothecis amoueret, quorum alterum ut nullius ingenii minimaque doctrinae, alterum ut uerbosum in historia neglegentemque carpebat* ("As for Virgil and Livy, Caligula came very near to having their works and busts removed from the libraries, claiming that Virgil had little knowledge and less skill; and that Livy was a wordy and inaccurate historian" [tr. Graves (1957)], *Cal.* 34.2). See Pomeroy (1989) 137 n. 38.

showing how Scipio reappropriates from Hannibal the heroic types of Virgilian and Homeric epic, and then look in detail at Scipio's visit to the world of the dead in *Punica* 13, as an example of an epic episode that confers heroic stature on Scipio.

1. *Double models*

Hannibal is the main character of the *Punica*: the antagonist has the over-arching role in the epic. Structurally, his role is like Aeneas', but his purpose is opposite to that of the founder of the Roman race (*pater Aeneas, Romanae stirpis origo*, "father Aeneas, the founder of the Roman race," *Aen.* 12.166). Hannibal wishes to destroy Rome, and so he becomes what von Albrecht calls a "Gegenbild zu Aeneas," an opposing mirror-image to Aeneas, or rather a "Punic Aeneas," in Vessey's words.⁴ In the structure of Virgil's epic, the first half presents Dido as the major obstacle to Aeneas' mission, and the second half, Turnus. Hannibal, too, must contend first with Fabius and then with Scipio as the major figures hindering his goals: Fabius holds him off, and Scipio ultimately defeats him. But Silius does not portray Fabius or Scipio as Dido or Turnus in specific episodes. The Flavian poet has reversed Virgil's schema in that the two blocking figures are the protagonists who have very different but complementary strengths. The comparison of Hannibal with Aeneas repeatedly draws attention to the differences between the two epic heroes and suggests the alternative Virgilian models of Dido and Turnus for Hannibal.

The main epic episodes that figure Hannibal as a type of Aeneas are Hannibal's duel with the Saguntine Murrus in *Punica* 1, which recalls Aeneas' fight with Turnus in *Aeneid* 12 (*Pun.* 1.456–517; *Aen.* 12.887–952); the description of Hannibal's new armor in *Punica* 2, which recalls Aeneas' in *Aeneid* 8 (*Pun.* 2.395–452; *Aen.* 8.608–728);⁵ the banquet scenes of *Punica* 11 and *Aeneid* 1 (*Pun.* 11.267–302, 385–482;

⁴ Von Albrecht (1964) 177; Vessey (1974b) 28. Vessey (1975) 401 also observes: "Aeneas founded Rome; but he also engendered Hannibal, who attempts, like a ghastly parody or hellish Doppelgänger of Aeneas, to conquer Italy and to subject it to Carthage." Ahl, Davis and Pomeroy (1986) 2511 comment: "Caesar and Hannibal... are curiously reversed images of Aeneas, inasmuch as what they are undertaking would, if successful, result in the destruction of the New Troy which it was Aeneas' duty to establish."

⁵ See Ganiban (84–91) and Harrison (282–85) in this volume.

Aen. 1.631–756); and the storms that drive the heroes away from Italy, toward Carthage (*Pun.* 17.236–91; *Aen.* 1.81–156). The sequence in the *Punica* reverses that in the *Aeneid*: the duel comes in the first book of the *Punica* and the last book of the *Aeneid*; Hannibal receives his new armor early in the epic rather than in its last half; the banquet scenes occur after Hannibal's major successes in Italy in the second half of the *Punica*, as opposed to the first book in the *Aeneid*, before Aeneas arrives in Italy; and the storm occurs in the final book of the *Punica*, but in the initial book of the *Aeneid*.⁶

Moreover, within these episodes themselves, the parallelism of Hannibal to Aeneas highlights the differences, and an alternate Virgilian model challenges Hannibal's role as Aeneas, the conqueror in Italy. At the siege of Saguntum, Silius offers a double Virgilian model for Hannibal, of Turnus and Aeneas. In the duel itself, Murrus is the loser, but unlike Turnus for Aeneas, Murrus is not Hannibal's major opponent, and his death is not decisive for the war's outcome. Hannibal successfully attacks a walled city, but it is Saguntum, rather than Rome, and it is early in the epic, not the final battle. Hannibal's shield is not divinely made like Aeneas', while its scenes are celebrating the past, rather than foretelling the future. It features pictures from the story of Dido juxtaposed with the oath Hannibal took as a boy in Dido's temple to make war on the Romans, drawing attention to Hannibal as the avenger invoked by Dido before she dies (*Aen.* 4.625).⁷ Hannibal attends a banquet in a foreign city like Aeneas, but the Carthaginian succumbs to Cupid (*Pun.* 11.420–23), as Dido did (*Aen.* 1.695–722). The storm sends Hannibal back to his home in Carthage rather than merely delaying his progress to Italy, for he has already been to Italy, tried to conquer, and failed. He will fight on his native soil, as Turnus did, and lose.

Hannibal's main rival for the role of Aeneas is Scipio, but in the first half of the *Punica*, Fabius plays the role of Aeneas in a subtle way to Hannibal's Turnus. Silius does not use full-scale epic episodes for Fabius as an Aeneas; instead, he employs a more muted system of allusions, a network of similes that suggest that Aeneas is a model for

⁶ Hardie (1993a) 13–14 and n. 26 makes the point about the duels and storms; see also Hardie (1997a) 160.

⁷ Gossage (1969) 76–77; Vessey (1975) 398. Virgil describes Turnus' shield more briefly (*Aen.* 7.789–92); see Small (1959).

Fabius.⁸ Silius establishes Scipio as a type of Aeneas in Scipio's first appearance carrying his father to safety on his neck and shoulders, as Aeneas had carried Anchises from Troy (*Pun.* 4.466–71; *Aen.* 2.705–29). The parallelism between Scipio and Aeneas is further confirmed by the trip to the underworld (*Pun.* 13.395–895; *Aen.* 6.1–901), the funeral games (*Pun.* 16.303–591; *Aen.* 5.42–603), and the final battle against Hannibal, in which Juno makes a likeness of Scipio to save Hannibal, as she had of Aeneas to save Turnus, after talking to Jupiter (*Pun.* 17.341–84, 522–80; *Aen.* 10.606–32, 633–88).⁹

When Silius creates these epic episodes to portray a character as a heroic type, naturally he imitates not just Virgil, but Homer.¹⁰ Silius' imitation may derive more directly from Homer and be combined with Virgil, as with the visit to the land of the dead in *Punica* 13, or it may be less direct, and mediated through Virgil, as with Hannibal's shield in *Punica* 2. The Flavian poet, however, uses the Homeric characters as part of his scheme of Virgilian imitation. Hannibal begins as a type of Achilles. In the duel between Hannibal and Murrus, the Carthaginian plays the part of Achilles (*Il.* 22.1–374), killing his opponent. Hannibal receives a shield as Achilles does in the *Iliad* (18.368–617; 19.1–39). Yet, as with Aeneas' decisive duel, Achilles' fight with Hector is located near the end of the epic, not in the beginning, and Achilles' shield is divinely made by Hephaestus and brought to him by his goddess mother, not by mortal hands.¹¹ In the second half of the *Punica*, Odysseus becomes Hannibal's Homeric model, and so Virgil's scheme of Homeric imitation featuring an Odyssean first half and an Iliadic second half is reversed for Hannibal. The general's stay in

⁸ Silius uses the first extended simile of the *Aeneid*, comparing Neptune to a statesman (1.148–56), to cast Fabius as an Aeneas (*Pun.* 7.253–59, but also *Pun.* 1.679–94), and the wolf similes in *Aen.* 9 (59–64 and 563–66), to cast Hannibal as Turnus (*Pun.* 7.126–30 and 717–22). On the similes, see Fucecchi in this volume (225–26).

⁹ Ahl, Davis and Pomeroy (1986) 2515 mention the scene of the likeness of Scipio and discuss Scipio as Aeneas (1986, 2542–55). Gossage (1969) 78 n. 45 and 91 mentions this episode but does not discuss Scipio as Aeneas except in passing ("Scipio shows some of the qualities of Aeneas from time to time," 88).

¹⁰ For Silius' imitation of Homer, see Juhnke (1972) and Ripoll (2001).

¹¹ Silius compares Hannibal to Achilles in a simile in *Pun.* 7 (120–22), but it is as the offspring of Thetis (*Thetidis proles*, *Pun.* 7.120) with the arms of Vulcan (*Vulcania.../arma*, *Pun.* 7.120–21), a comparison that rather highlights the differences between the two heroes. Moreover, later in the same book (7.596–97), a simile compares Fabius to Nestor, suggesting that it may be the Romans who are parallel to the Greeks, the winners of the war.

Capua in *Punica* 11 with its enticing banquets is a turning point for him, after which he no longer achieves major victories,¹² just as Odysseus' stay among the Phaeacians (*Od.* 6–12) proves a catalyst for the hero's return home. In *Punica* 12, Hannibal fails to make a trip to the land of the dead, like Odysseus' in *Odyssey* 11, and instead wanders around Cumae and its vicinity, attempting without success to capture the Campanian cities. The storm in the *Odyssey* (5.282–450), as in the *Aeneid*, is an early set-back for the hero, rather than the prelude to the final battle. Even after the scope of Silius' epic, Hannibal remains a failed Odysseus: as prophesied by the narrator in *Punica* 2 (699–707) and by the Sibyl in *Punica* 13 (874–93), Hannibal will wander as an exile after the battle of Zama, like Odysseus and Aeneas after Troy, but whereas both of the earlier heroes reach their destinations, Hannibal fails in his mission completely.

Silius portrays Scipio as a type of Aeneas through episodes that go back to the Homeric epics. In the last third of the *Punica*, Scipio reappropriates not just the figure of Aeneas, but also of Odysseus in the *nekylia* of *Punica* 13 and of Achilles in the funeral games of *Punica* 16. In particular, *Punica* 13 is Silius' most Odyssean book: Silius here imitates not only the *katabasis* of *Aeneid* 6, but also the *nekylia* in *Odyssey* 11. In the funeral games for Scipio's father and uncle in *Punica* 16, Silius imitates both Aeneas' funeral games for Anchises from *Aeneid* 5 and Achilles' funeral games for Patroclus from *Iliad* 23. In this way Silius extends Scipio's reappropriation of epic heroes, using double models to cast Scipio as both an Aeneas and an Odysseus in *Punica* 13, and as both an Aeneas and an Achilles in *Punica* 16.

Silius adopts Virgil's technique of imitation by setting up alternate models for his characters. Hannibal's Virgilian models can be seen as both Aeneas and Turnus, as, in the *Aeneid*, Turnus' Homeric models can be seen as both Achilles and Hector.¹³ In both Silius and Virgil these double models present a question to the audience. Will Hannibal be like Aeneas, the foreign invader who fought and won a war in Italy and then established his line of descendants? Or will he be like

¹² Bassett (1966) 258–60.

¹³ On Virgil's imitation of Homer, see Knauer (1964); Anderson (1957); Gransden (1984) 120–21. See Lyne (1987) 108–9 on Turnus and Achilles. See also Cairns (1989) *passim* and Small (1959) 249. As with Turnus, Hannibal's Homeric models include both Achilles (concerning the shield) and Hector (parting from their respective wives at *Pun.* 3.61–157 and at *Il.* 6.392–496).

Turnus, the leader of the losing side in the war? In the *Aeneid*, will Turnus be like Achilles, Aeneas' former opponent, or like the vanquished Hector? Ultimately the winners are Scipio, Aeneas, and Achilles, and the losers are Hannibal, Turnus, and Hector. But Silius exploits the model of Aeneas for Hannibal to suggest the unfulfilled possibility of Carthaginian world rule instead of Roman.

Silius expresses this possibility more directly through contrafactual conditions at key points for his three main characters.¹⁴ Before the battle of Zama, Silius relates the two armies' views of their leaders:

quin etiam, fauor ut subigit plerosque metusue,
 Scipio si Libycis esset generatus in oris,
 sceptrum ad Agenoreos credunt uentura nepotes,
 Hannibal Ausonia genitus si sede fuisset,
 haud dubitant terras Italia in dicione futuras. (*Pun.* 17.401–5)

Indeed, as partiality or fear moves very many, they believe that if Scipio had been born on Libyan shores, rule would go to Dido's descendants, and if Hannibal had been born in an Ausonian home, they do not doubt that the lands would be under Italian control.

A reversal of ethnicity would be accompanied by a reversal of rule. This view is voiced in connection with Fabius, too, by Cilnius, a Roman taken prisoner by Hannibal:¹⁵

non cum Flaminio tibi res, nec feruida Gracchi
 in manibus consulta' inquit; 'Tirynthia gens est.
 quam si fata tuis genuissent, Hannibal, oris,
 terrarum imperium Carthaginis arce uideres... (*Pun.* 7.34–37)

"You are not dealing with Flaminius, nor are the impetuous decisions of Gracchus at hand," he said. "His family is Hercules', and if the fates had begotten them on your shores, Hannibal, you would see the authority of the lands in Carthage's citadel..."

Cilnius' words echo the proem to the *Punica*, where Silius states a basic theme of the epic, the question of "on which citadel Fortune would at last place the capital of the world" (*Pun.* 1.7–8).¹⁶ Cilnius reiterates the narrator's emphasis on the importance of Fabius at the beginning of *Punica* 7, namely that without Fabius' strategy of delay, the Roman race would no longer exist (*Pun.* 7.9–11). Similarly, in Scipio's visit

¹⁴ On contrafactuals, see Cowan in this volume (323–51).

¹⁵ See also Ariemma in this volume (246).

¹⁶ See also Cowan in this volume (334–35).

to the underworld, Silius marks the importance of the hero's divine origin from Jupiter. He tells how Venus enflamed Jupiter with love of Pomponia (*Pun.* 13.615–19),¹⁷ then asserts that if Venus had not done so, Carthaginians would now be tending the Vestal fire (*Pun.* 13.619–20). It is Scipio's divine parentage that prevented Carthaginian rule of Rome. On the level of imitation, this theme takes the form of the hypothesis that if Hannibal had truly been like Aeneas and not an antitype, Carthage would be the ruler of the world.

With the prospect of world rule, Silius brings in the wide scope of history, even to his own day (*nunc*, *Pun.* 13.620). From his perspective in the first century AD, Carthage is a city second only to Rome; for a Carthaginian to have a proto-Roman/Trojan or an Italian model is no longer so opposite a role as in the time of the Punic conflict. In the *Aeneid*, Virgil could portray the world war between Trojans and Italians as civil strife because of his anachronistic perspective: Aeneas is the founder of the Roman race, and Trojans will join Italians to become one people. By Silius' day, Carthage had long been part of the Roman empire, so Hannibal's assault can be seen anachronistically as one coming from within the same political unit, even though the poet is presenting a time before this political entity was in place. The typology of Hannibal as Aeneas, the founder of the race he is attacking, underlines this idea, and Silius also uses this typology to create a "stable irony":¹⁸ Rome's greatest enemy is cast as its founder, and contrary to Hannibal's wishes, he does turn out to be like Aeneas in establishing Rome's supremacy.

The overarching Roman heroes in the epic are Fabius and Scipio, and it is Scipio whom Silius ultimately establishes as the true counterpart of Aeneas. Early in the epic, the poet presents Fabius as a type of Aeneas, but Fabius is the *Cunctator*, and success in the war requires the Romans to shift to attack mode. This paradigm change occurs after Cannae. In *Punica* 10, Paulus recommends Fabius to the Romans in his last words (*Pun.* 10.282), and Silius praises Paulus by comparing him to Fabius (*Pun.* 10.305–7). Then in *Punica* 12 and 14, Marcellus, whom Silius compares to Scipio (*Pun.* 15.341–42), begins the shift to more offensive action, as he combines the abilities of both Fabius and

¹⁷ Venus' ensuring Jupiter as Scipio's father echoes her ensnaring of Dido in the *Aeneid* to ensure her goodwill toward Aeneas (*Pun.* 13.617–19; *Aen.* 1.660).

¹⁸ The term "stable irony" is borrowed from Booth (1974).

Scipio. The debate in *Punica* 16, giving Scipio permission to cross to Africa, finally puts the Romans on the attack.

In the *Aeneid*, a similar shift to attack mode can be seen within the character of Aeneas, when he leaves behind the old Trojan model of defending one's city and takes on the role of the attacker of Latinus' walled city (*Aen.* 12.554–56). Aeneas abandons the cycle of the Trojan War, in which he was defeated, by becoming like Achilles, a foreign attacker of natives who are defending their city. Turnus is prophesied by the Sibyl as another Achilles (*Aen.* 6.89), and he himself claims to be like Achilles (*Aen.* 9.742), but in *Aeneid* 12 he becomes instead like Hector in *Iliad* 22, fleeing for his life, pleading, and dying. When Scipio takes on the role of the Achillean Aeneas and forces Hannibal to return to Africa, the Carthaginian must abandon the role of Aeneas, the successful attacker in Italy, and take on more fitting roles: Hannibal is again in the land of his ancestress Dido, fighting on his native soil, as Turnus did.¹⁹

Scipio's assumption of the role of Aeneas and his victory in the war complete Silius' representation of Hannibal, suggested throughout the epic, as a reverse Aeneas. Scipio has the triumph that is missing from Hannibal's shield; he makes the right choice of *Virtus* over *Voluptas* in *Punica* 15, as Hannibal had failed to do in Capua; and he wins the final battle as a foreign attacker in Hannibal's country.²⁰

Scipio's reappropriation of the role of Aeneas is particularly marked in the contrast of his visit to see his dead father and uncle in *Punica* 13 with Hannibal's half-hearted sightseeing of areas associated with the underworld in *Punica* 12.²¹ I will first demonstrate how Hannibal's visit to the region showcases his failure as an epic hero, and I will then turn to Silius' extensive imitation of *Aeneid* 6 and *Odyssey* 11 in *Punica* 13, which presents Scipio as taking on the roles of Aeneas and Odysseus. Finally, I will show the importance of the story of Scipio's divine parentage in his portrayal as an epic hero.

¹⁹ In the final episode of the final battle of the war, each warrior has his proper Virgilian model, Scipio as Aeneas and Hannibal as Turnus (*Pun.* 17.522–80). For Scipio as “the true emulator of Achilles,” see Ripoll (2001) 87–107, especially 101.

²⁰ Hannibal had at times regarded Italy as his own *patria* (*Pun.* 11.424, 17.216), but it is Carthage that becomes Roman. For Scipio's choice, see *Pun.* 15.18–130.

²¹ On the *nekýia*, see Juhnke (1972) 280–97 and 401–404; Kißel (1979) 162–84; Reitz (1982); Billerbeck (1983); Ripoll (2001). As with Hannibal's victory over Saguntum, his truly Herculean feat occurs early in the epic, when he crosses the Alps in *Pun.* 3.

2. *Hannibal in Punica 12*

In book 12, Hannibal leaves Capua having spending the winter there, while he and his troops have lost strength (*Pun.* 12.15). He attacks Naples (*Pun.* 12.27–59), but is driven off, and then he tries Cumae (*Pun.* 12.60–106), again unsuccessfully.²² There is a slight echo of Aeneas' arrival in Cumae, but the tone of the Silian passages is different: Hannibal has been trying without success to take Naples and in frustration “finally” (*tandem*, *Pun.* 12.60) decides to attack Cumae instead;²³ Aeneas, on the other hand, has “finally” (*tandem*, *Aen.* 6.2) reached his goal, Italy. While seeking a way of attack, Hannibal happens to see (*cernit*, *Pun.* 12.85) the temple, whereas for Aeneas, it is his destination (*petit*, *Aen.* 6.11). The purpose of Hannibal's and Aeneas' visit in Campania differs: Hannibal seeks to conquer the towns in the area and only incidentally comes to the site of the entrance to the underworld, while Aeneas is following the command of his dead father, sent to him by Jupiter, to visit the Underworld (*Aen.* 5.722–40). It is only the beginning of Aeneas' time in Italy, whereas Hannibal has been in Italy for years (218–212 BC), and all his major successes (at the Ticinus, the Trebia, Lake Trasimene, Cannae and Capua) belong to the past.

Hannibal and Aeneas have markedly different guides also. Hannibal is shown the sights by Virrius, a merciless leader of Capua (*immitis dux*, *Pun.* 12.87), who led the Capuan envoys to the Roman senate to demand an equal share in the consulship (*Pun.* 11.55–121), and who then urged the Capuans to join Hannibal (*Pun.* 11.129–54). Aeneas, on the other hand, seeks the guidance of the awe-inspiring Sibyl of Apollo (*horrendae...Sibyllae*, *Aen.* 6.10). During the attack on Cumae, Virrius shows Hannibal the temple to Apollo built by Daedalus, the same temple seen by Aeneas at the beginning of *Aeneid* 6. But Hannibal fails to understand or connect with his location, even with a guide.

In the story of the temple's founding by Daedalus, Silius clearly signals his allusions to *Aeneid* 6:

²² Cf. Liv. 23.15.2; 23.36–37; 24.12.4; and 24.13.6–7. Silius applies Livy's description of the events of Cumae to Naples.

²³ “At last, tired out, he decided to turn to the nearby harbor of Cumae” (*Tandem ad uicinos Cumarum uertere portus/defessus statuit*, *Pun.* 12.60–61); “and at last he glides to the Euboean shores of Cumae” (*et tandem Euboicis Cumarum adlabitur oris*, *Aen.* 6.2).

‘non est hoc’ inquit ‘nostri, quod suspicis, aeui;
maiores fecere manus. cum bella timeret
Dictaei regis, sic fama est, linquere terras
Daedalus inuenit nec toto signa sequenti
orbe dare, aetherias *aliena tollere in auras*
ausus se penna atque homini monstrare uolatus.
suspensum hic librans media inter nubila corpus
enauit superosque nouus conterruit ales.
natum etiam docuit falsae sub imagine plumae
attemptare uias uolucrum, lapsumque solutis
pennarum remis et non felicibus alis
turbida plaudentem uidit freta, dumque dolori
indulget subito motis ad pectora palmis,
nescius heu planctu duxit moderante uolatus.
hic pro nubiuago gratus pia templa meatu
instituit Phoebe atque audaces exiit alas.’
(*Pun.* 12.88–103)

Daedalus, ut fama est, fugiens Minoia regna
praepetibus pennis ausus se credere caelo
insuetum per iter gelidas enauit ad Arctos,
Chalcidicaque leuis tandem super astiuit arce.
redditus his primum terris tibi, Phoebe, sacrauit
remigium alarum posuitque immania templa.
(*Aen.* 6.14–19)

“What you are looking up at,” he says, “is not of our time; more ancient hands made it. When Daedalus feared the wars of the Dictaeon king (so the story goes), he discovered how to leave behind the lands, not giving any signs to the one following him over all the earth, having dared to raise himself onto the ethereal breezes on alien wings, and to show flight to humans. This man, balancing his body poised among the middle of the clouds, floated out, and the new bird filled those above with fear. He taught his son also to try the ways of birds under the likeness of false wings, and he saw him fallen, with the oars of his wings loosened, and striking the agitated waters with inauspicious wings. And while he was yielding to his sudden grief, with his hands striking his breast, unknowingly, alas, he brought about flight, his blows of lamentation guiding. Here, thankful for his cloud-wandering movement, he established a devout temple to Phoebus and put aside his daring wings.”

Daedalus, as the story goes, when fleeing Minos’ realms, having dared to entrust himself to the sky on swift wings, floated out along the unusual route to the icy north and at last stood lightly above the Chalcidian citadel. Restored first to these lands, he consecrated to you, Phoebus, the oarage of his wings, and he set up a vast temple.

In both epics the narrative of Daedalus is marked as a story with the phrase *fama est* (*Pun.* 12.90; *Aen.* 6.14), and there are a number of verbal echoes and parallel emphases, as shown above.²⁴ The reactions of Aeneas and Hannibal to the story of Daedalus differ (*Pun.* 12.104–5; *Aen.* 6.33–35). Aeneas is absorbed by the story depicted on the doors, until the priestess urges him to conduct the sacrifices (*Aen.* 6.37–39). Hannibal, on the other hand, gives no indication of having even listened to the story, since he is preoccupied with lack of martial activity. To the reader, Hannibal's lack of interest suggests a metatextual point: Hannibal misses the significance of the fact that he is at the site of the underworld, where Aeneas (taking on the role of heroes before him) sought guidance and success for his mission in Italy (*Aen.* 6.66–68).

Hannibal next attacks Puteoli and views the sites there (*Pun.* 12.106–33) and in nearby areas (*Pun.* 12.133–57).²⁵ Silius' allusions to the Virgilian underworld continue: Hannibal sees the Lucrine lake, once called the Cocytus (*Pun.* 12.116–19; cf. e.g., *Aen.* 6.132, 297, 323); Lake Avernus, once called the Styx, where the Silian description recalls the entrance to the underworld in Virgil (*Pun.* 12.120–25; *Aen.* 6.237–42);²⁶

²⁴ Ovid uses the metaphor of oars for wings (*Met.* 8.228) in his account of Daedalus and Icarus (*Met.* 8.183–235); Lucretius uses it in his account of Avernian sites, such as Cumae (*Lucr.* 6.743); Virgil also uses it for Mercury's flight (*Aen.* 1.301). For other instances of the metaphor, see Austin (1977) 41–42.

²⁵ See Muecke (2007) for this episode; on Hannibal's inability to comprehend the sites in book 12, see Manolaraki in this volume (314–18).

²⁶ Consider the similarities in diction:

ille, olim populis dictum Styga, nomine uerso
stagna inter celebrem nunc mitia monstrat Auernum;
 tum tristi *nemore* atque *umbris* *nigrantibus* horrens
 et formidatus *uolucris letale uomebat*
 suffuso uirus *caelo* Stygiaque per urbes
 religione sacer saeuum retinebat honorem. (*Pun.* 12.120–25)

spelunca alta fuit uastoque immanis hiatu,
 scrupca, tuta *lacu nigro nemorumque tenebris*,
 quam super *haud* ullae poterant *impune uolantes*
 tendere iter pennis: talis sese *halitus* atris
faucibus effundens supera ad conuexa ferebat.
 [unde locum Grai dixerunt nomine Aornum.] (*Aen.* 6.237–42)

That man shows him the Avernus, its name changed, once called the Styx by the people, celebrated among the pools now mild. At that time, awful in the gloomy wood and black shadows and dreaded by birds, it spewed out a lethal poison to the vapor-filled sky; and, sacred with Stygian ritual, it maintained a savage honor through the cities.

and the swamp connected with the river Acheron (*Pun.* 12.126–29; *Aen.* 6.106–9).²⁷ Once Aeneas has entered the underworld, he comes to the road leading to the Acheron (*hinc uia Tartarei quae fert Acherontis ad undas*, *Aen.* 6.295); Silius echoes Virgil's line ending (*Acherontis ad undas*, *Pun.* 12.126),²⁸ recalling Aeneas' entrance into the underworld and suggesting a contrast with Hannibal's actions in the same geographical location: unlike Aeneas, Hannibal does not enter the underworld.

At the beginning of Hannibal's tour of Puteoli and the surrounding areas, the explanation of how Baiae received its name strikes an Odyssean note:²⁹ Baius, a companion on Odysseus' Dulichian ship (*comitem .../Dulichiae puppis*, *Pun.* 12.114–15), gave his name to the hot springs. This reference is picked up at the end of Hannibal's tour of Puteoli by a reference to the *nekyia* of *Odyssey* 11. Hannibal's guides tell him that the underworld is nearby in a description that recalls Odysseus' trip to the land of the dead.³⁰

There was a deep cave with jagged rocks, frightfully large with a vast chasm, protected by the black lake and the shadows of the woods, over which no birds could direct their way with their wings unpunished: such an exhalation made its way from the black jaws pouring to the upper air. [Hence the Greeks called the place by the name "birdless."]

²⁷ Consider the following similarities also:

huic uicina palus (*fama est Acherontis ad undas*
pandere iter) caecas stagnante uoragine fauces
 laxat et horrendos aperit telluris hiatus
 interdum que nouo perturbat lumine manes.

(*Pun.* 12.126–29)

unum oro: quando hic inferni ianua regis
 dicitur et tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso,
 ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora
 contingat; doceas iter et sacra ostia pandas.

(*Aen.* 6.106–9)

Near to this, a swamp (the story is that it opens the way to the waters of Acheron) widens its dark jaws with a flooding abyss and reveals the terrible chasms of the earth, and sometimes disturbs the spirits with an unfamiliar light.

One thing I ask: since the gate of the infernal king is said to be here, and the dark swamp where the Acheron overflows, may it be granted to go to the sight and face of my dear father; may you teach the way and open the sacred entrance.

²⁸ This line ending also occurs in Propertius 3.5.13. Virrius uses almost the same line ending (*Acherontis ad undam*, *Pun.* 13.271), when he invites other Capuans to drink poison with him, after the Romans recapture the town. Silius also echoes Virgil's description of the underworld in *Aen.* 7, when Allecto is about to return there: *Acheronte uorago/pestiferas aperit fauces* ("in Acheron a whirlpool opens its pestilential jaws," *Aen.* 7.568–69; cf. *Pun.* 12.126–28).

²⁹ For Baius, cf. *sedes Ithacesia Bai* ("the Ithacan seat of Baius," *Pun.* 8.539), and Servius *ad Aen.* 6.107 and 9.707.

³⁰ Reitz (1982) 20 notes the echo.

at iuxta caligantes longumque per aeuum
 infernis pressas nebulis pallente sub umbra
 Cimmerias iacuisse domos noctemque profundam
 Tartareae narrant urbis.

(*Pun.* 12.130–33)

ἔνθα δὲ Κιμμερίων ἀνδρῶν δῆμός τε πόλις τε,
 ἥερι καὶ νεφέλῃ κεκαλυμμένοι· οὐδέ ποτ' αὐτοὺς
 Ἥελιος φαέθων καταδέρκεται ἀκτίνεσσιν,
 οὔθ' ὅπότε ἂν στείχῃσι πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα,
 οὔθ' ὅτ' ἂν ἄψ ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἀπ' οὐρανόθεν προτράπηται,
 ἀλλ' ἐπὶ νύξ ὅλοη τέταται δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι.

(*Od.* 11.14–19)

But they say that close by Cimmerian homes and the profound night of the Tartarean city have lain shrouded in darkness for centuries pressed by infernal mists under dim shadow.

There lie the land and city of the Cimmerian men, covered in mist and cloud; nor does shining Helios ever look down on them with his rays, neither when he goes towards starry sky, nor when he turns back to earth from sky, but deadly night is spread over wretched mortals.

Both passages describe the land of the dead with specific mention of the Cimmerians. The description is similar: both poets stress the darkness and mention clouds (*nebulis*; νεφέλῃ) and shadow or mist (*umbra*; ἥερι), and night (*noctem*; νύξ); and Silius reproduces the sound of δῆμος in *domos* and of κεκαλυμμένοι in *caligantis*. The volcanic activity of the area (*Pun.* 12.133–57) is also associated with the underworld (*Stygios...flatus*, *Pun.* 12.137), as well as with Vulcan (*Pun.* 12.138–42) and the giants (*Pun.* 12.143–51). Hannibal's reacts by marveling at the wonders of nature (*miratur*, *Pun.* 12.157), but he turns back to warfare without taking an epic descent, failing as both an Odysseus and as an Aeneas.

The reference to the rebellion of the Giants against Jupiter recalls the Sibyl's description of Tartarus in the *Aeneid*, where the Titans are punished (*Pun.* 12.143–51; *Aen.* 6.580–86).³¹ It is a particularly significant

³¹ These are the similarities between the two passages:
 tradunt Herculea prostratos mole Gigantas
 tellurem iniectam quater et spiramine anhelō
 torrerī late campos quotiensque minantur
 rumpere compagem impositam, expallescere caelum.
 apparet Prochyte saeuum sortita Mimanta,
 apparet procul Inarime, quae turbine nigro
 fumantem premit Iapetum flammasque rebelli
 ore eiectantem et, si quando euadere detur,
 bella Ioui rursus superisque iterare uolentem.

(*Pun.* 12.143–51)

sight for Hannibal, since he himself wages wars against Jupiter in his assault on Rome later in *Punica* 12 (605–728). Like Otus and Ephialtes, the twin Aloidae (*Aloidas geminos*, *Aen.* 6.582), Hannibal wants to cast Jupiter from his home, but in Hannibal's case it is specifically the Roman Thunderer, whom he wishes to remove from the Capitol (*demigrantem Tarpeia sede Tonantem*, "the Thunderer evicted from his Tarpeian seat," *Pun.* 12.517; cf. *Aen.* 6.584). Like these giants, Hannibal is repelled with a thunderbolt (*Pun.* 12.622–26; *Aen.* 6.581). He does not stop until Juno tells him, "at last, yield to the gods and cease the wars of the Titans" (*cede deis tandem et Titania desine bella*, *Pun.* 12.725). As Hardie notes, "Hannibal attempts to be another Hercules but succeeds only in playing the role of a Titan or Giant."³² In *Punica* 3, Hannibal crosses the Alps like Hercules, but in Silius' epic, Hannibal's war against Rome puts him on the other side from that of Hercules, against the gods. It is Scipio who is compared to Hercules walking in the Phlegraean fields after having defeated the Giants in the last image of the epic, Scipio in triumph (*Pun.* 17.649–50).

hic genus antiquum Terrae, Titania pubes,
 fulmine deiecti fundo uoluuntur in imo.
 hic et Aloidas geminos immania uidi
 corpora, qui manibus magnum rescindere caelum
 adgressi superisque Iouem detrudere regnis.
 uidi et crudelis dantem Salmonea poenas,
 dum flammas Iouis et sonitus imitatur Olympi. (*Aen.* 6.580–86)

They say that the Giants, laid low by Hercules' might, shake the ground thrown on top, that the fields far and wide are scorched by their panting breath, and that, whenever they threaten to break open the structure placed on them, heaven turns pale. There appears Prochyte, having received savage Mimas; there appears far off Inarime, which weighs down Iapetus, who smokes with a black whirling and emits flames from his rebel mouth, and, if ever it is granted to escape, wishes to repeat the wars against Jupiter and the gods above.

Here the ancient race of Earth, the company of Titans, struck down by a thunderbolt, roll in the lowest depths. Here too I saw the enormous bodies of the two Aloidae, who tried to break open great heaven with their hands and to drive Jupiter from his realms above. I saw too Salmoneus paying the cruel penalty while he imitated the flames of Jupiter and the sounds of Olympus.

³² Hardie (1993a) 80, and Hardie (1989) 14–15: "Hannibal, the general who would take on the Herculean role of an Aeneas, but who in fact plays out the Gigantic impiety of a Turnus." On Hercules in the poem, see also Asso (179–92) and Tipping (193–218) in this volume.

3. *Scipio in Punica 13: Silius' imitation of Aeneid 6 and Odyssey 11*

Unlike Hannibal, Scipio experiences a full-scale epic *katabasis*. Silius marks the comparison the the two trips to Cumae with an intratextual verbal echo of Hannibal's previous tour in the area:³³

hortatur uicina palus, ubi signat Auerni
squalentem introitum stagnans Acherusius umor. (Pun. 13.397–98)

huic uicina palus (fama est Acherontis ad undas
pandere iter) caecas stagnante uoragine fauces
laxat... (Pun. 12.126–28)

The nearby swamp urges him on, where the flooding Acherusian water marks the murky entrance of Avernus.

Near to this, a swamp (the story is that it opens the way to the waters of Acheron) widens its dark jaws with a flooding abyss...

The comparison places the two trips in marked contrast: Scipio reverses Hannibal's itinerary, leaving Puteoli (Pun. 13.385) for Cumae, whereas Hannibal had attacked first Cumae, then Puteoli (Pun. 12.107). Unlike Hannibal, Scipio comes to Cumae specifically to visit the dead, after he learns that his father and uncle have died in Spain, and he succeeds in his mission. In *Punica* 12, Hannibal experiences failure, first at Naples, Cumae, and Puteoli, and then in his epic mission to capture the city of his sworn enemy, the Romans.³⁴

In the visit to the dead, Scipio walks in the path of two epic ancestors at the same time, Aeneas and Odysseus, as Hannibal had appeared as both Aeneas and Achilles, though without divine parentage, when he received his shield in the second book. But by this time in the epic, Hannibal is losing even the pretence of taking on the roles of former epic heroes. At *Punica* 12.132, quoted above, the mention of the Cimmerians recalls Odysseus' trip to the land of the dead in the context of Hannibal's rather perfunctory visit. At the beginning of *Punica* 13, Silius indirectly contrasts Hannibal with Odysseus again: Odysseus'

³³ The collocation of *uicina palus* occurs only in these two passages in Latin literature. Reitz (1982) 20–21 also notes the echo.

³⁴ At the beginning of *Punica* 12, Hannibal is compared to a snake emerging after winter (Pun. 12.6–10), and then in his first attack, there is a simile (Pun. 12.55–59) of a snake driven off by the golden eagle of Jupiter (Naples, Rome's ally) and with thunderbolts, in a foreshadowing of how Hannibal will be repelled from Rome with Jupiter's help at the end of the book (Pun. 12.505–752).

theft of the Palladium had enabled him to take Troy, but Hannibal is incapable of capturing Rome, since it is protected by the ancient talisman (*Pun.* 13.1–83).³⁵ Rome is parallel to Troy, though Hannibal fails as a type of Odysseus, the sacker of Ilium. Later in *Punica* 13, it is Scipio who successfully assumes the role of Odysseus, as well as the role of Aeneas, heroes who visited the land of the dead. I will now detail the correspondences among the epic visits to the land of the dead in *Punica* 13, *Aeneid* 6 and *Odyssey* 11. Silius' imitation portrays Scipio's reappropriation of the heroic paradigms that Hannibal has been usurping.

Silius' section before Scipio meets the dead (*Pun.* 13.395–444) is shorter than Virgil's description of Aeneas' preparations for his *katabasis* (*Aen.* 6.1–263).³⁶ Both Scipio and Aeneas go to Cumae, meet with a priestess of Apollo, make a request to visit their dead fathers, and are advised on what to do to achieve their purpose. Like Aeneas, Scipio turns for guidance to a priestess of Apollo, who is named in both epics: in Virgil, *Deiphobe Glauci* (*Aen.* 6.36); in Silius, *Autonoe* (*Pun.* 13.401, 489); Hannibal's hasty tour requires no such help. Like Aeneas, Scipio goes straight to the cave of the priestess and explains his purpose: he wishes to see his father (*Pun.* 13.400–3; *Aen.* 6.106–9).³⁷ In Virgil, there is one priestess of Apollo, while in Silius, there are two: Autonoe,

³⁵ See Ripoll (2001) 94–95, on this passage.

³⁶ Silius' preamble to the underworld is 50 lines, whereas Virgil's is more than 250.

³⁷ Consider the following points of contact:

Sic ad Cymacem, quae tum sub nomine Phoebi
Autonoe tripodas sacros antrumque tenebat,
fert gressus iuuenis consultaque pectoris aegri
pandit et adspectus orat contingere patrum. (*Pun.* 13.400–3)

unum oro: quando hic inferni ianua regis
dicitur et tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso,
ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora
contingat; doceas iter et sacra ostia pandas. (*Aen.* 6.106–9)

So the young man directs his steps to Cumaean Autonoe, who ruled the sacred tripods and cave under Phoebus' name at that time, and he reveals the plans of his sick heart and asks to achieve the sight of his kinsmen.

One thing I ask: since the gate of the infernal king is said to be here, and the dark swamp where the Acheron overflows, may it be granted to go to the sight and face of my dear father; may you teach the way and open the sacred entrance.

Compare the ancient Sibyl's perception of Scipio's purpose: *patrios uisu contingere manes* ("to have sight of your kinsmen's ghosts," *Pun.* 13.506). Scipio decides to visit his dead relatives to assuage his grief (*Pun.* 13.393–96). Reitz (1982) 19 notes the echo of *facies...parentis* (*Aen.* 5.722), describing Anchises' ghost motivating Aeneas to visit the underworld, and *species...parentum* (*Pun.* 13.394), describing what causes Scipio to

Apollo's current prophet, who conducts Scipio to the entrance to the underworld and advises him on sacrifice (*Pun.* 13.400–93), and then the ghost of an ancient Sibyl, who shows him the underworld (*Pun.* 13.494–895). Silius' second priestess is not named.³⁸

In their first appearances, Autonoë and Deiphobe convey a sense of urgency (*Pun.* 13.404; *Aen.* 6.37) and advise the heroes how to sacrifice (*Pun.* 13.404–7, 416; *Aen.* 6.38–39, 153).³⁹ The sacrifices before visiting the dead take place at night: Silius' Autonoë specifies *sub lucem* ("before the dawn," *Pun.* 13.406) and *a medio cum se nox umida cursu/flexerit* ("when dewy night has moved past her middle point," *Pun.* 13.413–14); in Virgil, they finish the sacrificing *primi sub limina solis et ortus* ("just before the sun had crossed his threshold in the sky and begun to rise," *Aen.* 6.255).⁴⁰ In both epics, the priestesses give the heroes instructions for what they must do: Autonoë focuses on the sacrifices, whereas Deiphobe tells Aeneas that he must find the golden bough and bury Misenus. Both heroes promptly perform their duties (*Pun.* 13.417–18; *Aen.* 6. 236), and then render themselves at the entrance to the underworld, which is described similarly (*Pun.* 13.424–27; *Aen.* 6.237–41).⁴¹

decide to undertake the deed. For Aeneas going straight to the cave of the priestess, see *Aen.* 6.9–13; for Aeneas' purpose, see *Aen.* 6.106–9.

³⁸ For the "doubling of the Sibyl" in Silius, see Reitz (1982) 16–17, who points out that Silius has divided the two functions of Deiphobe as priestess of Apollo, 'useful to Aeneas on earth,' and as priestess of Hecate, whose realm is the underworld. There are two guides for Scipio as there are for Aeneas and Odysseus: in the *Punica*, Autonoë and the ancient Sibyl; in the *Aeneid*, Deiphobe and Anchises; and in the *Odyssey*, Circe and Teiresias. For the correspondence of Lucan's Phemonoë (*Luc.* 5.65–236) to Silius' Autonoë and ancient Sibyl, see Bassett (1963) 83–84.

³⁹ In Virgil, Aeneas makes sacrifices twice, both before he enters the temple and before he enters the underworld, and consequently Deiphobe tells Aeneas what to sacrifice on two separate occasions. Scipio only sacrifices at the entrance to the underworld. Scipio is urged to sacrifice black animals (*mactare.../piacula nigras/...pecudes*, *Pun.* 13.404–6) and to bring honey and wine (*Pun.* 13.416); Aeneas is urged to make an initial sacrifice of bullocks and sheep before entering the temple (*mactare iuuenecos/...bidentis*, *Aen.* 6.37–39) and later to bring black animals to sacrifice before entering the realm of the dead (*nigras pecudes...piacula*, *Aen.* 6.153); in *Aeneid* 5, Anchises had mentioned the sacrifice of black animals (*nigrarum...pecudum*, *Aen.* 5.736). Black animals are also offered in Homer's *nekya*: Odysseus promises to sacrifice an all-black ram to Teiresias when he returns home (*Od.* 11.32–33), as Circe had advised (*Od.* 10.524–25). Circe also tells Odysseus to sacrifice a black ewe (*Od.* 10.527) and she brings one to his ship (*Od.* 10.572). Circe advises Odysseus to pour drink offerings of honey mixed with milk, as well as wine and water (*Od.* 10.519–20); cf. *Pun.* 13.416).

⁴⁰ In his edition, Hirtzel (1900) reads *sub limina* (*Aen.* 6.255), which is closer to Silius *sub lucem* (*Pun.* 13.406), but Mynors (1969) replaces it with *sub limina*.

⁴¹ Compare Hannibal in *Punica* 12 (126–29; 135–37) to Scipio at the entrance to the underworld (*Pun.* 13.424–27).

In both descriptions, there is a cave (*specus*, *Pun.* 13.425; *spelunca*, *Aen.* 6.237), the opening of which is emphasized (*rupta tellure recludit*, “opens itself up with the earth split,” *Pun.* 13.424; *uastoque immanis hiatu*, “large with a vast chasm,” *Aen.* 6.237), and which exudes noxious fumes (*Pun.* 13.425–26; *Aen.* 6.239–41) to the sky.

The sacrifices of Scipio and Aeneas at the entrance to the underworld are also similar (*Pun.* 13.427–34; *Aen.* 6.243–54):⁴²

ferroque cauare refossam
ocius urget humum atque arcanum murmur anhelans
ordine mactari pecudes iubet: ater operto
ante omnes taurus regi, tum proxima diuiae
caeditur Hennaecae casta ceruice iuuenca.
inde tibi, Allecto, tibi, numquam laeta Megaera,
corpora lanigerum procumbunt lecta bidentum.
fundunt mella super Bacchique et lactis honorem. (*Pun.* 13.427–34)

quattuor hic primum nigrantis terga iuuencos
constituit frontique inuergit uina sacerdos,
et summas carpens media inter cornua saetas
ignibus imponit sacris, libamina prima,
uoce uocans Hecaten caeloque Ereboque potentem.
supponunt alii cultros tepidumque cruorem
succipiunt pateris, ipse atri uelleris agnam
Aeneas matri Eumenidum magnaеque sorori
ense ferit, sterilemque tibi, Proserpina, uaccam;
tum Stygio regi nocturnas incohat aras
et solida imponit taurorum uiscera flammis,
pingue super oleum fundens ardentibus extis. (*Aen.* 6.243–54)

And she urges him to hollow out the dug up earth with his sword without delay, and, panting a mysterious utterance, she orders the animals to be sacrificed in due order. Before all, a black bull is slaughtered for the hidden king, then the next heifer with its untouched neck for the goddess of Henna. Then for you, Allecto, and for you, Megaera who is never happy, the chosen bodies of wool-bearing yearling sheep fall. They pour over top honey and the offering of Bacchus and milk.

⁴² Autoño leaves Scipio, saying *tempus...pecudes imponere flammis* (“it is time to place the animals on the flames,” *Pun.* 13.493), which recalls Aeneas’ sacrifice (*imponit taurorum uiscera flammis*, “he places the entrails of the bulls on the flames,” *Aen.* 6.253). Compare also Appius Claudius asking Scipio for burial rites because his people are slow *flammis imponere corpus* (“to place the body on the flames,” *Pun.* 13.461). See Bassett (1963), especially 74–75, 84–85, and 88–89, on parallels for the phrase *imponere flammis*. Aeneas’ sacrifice of a barren cow to Proserpina recalls Odysseus’ promise of the same sacrifice for the dead (*Od.* 11.30), recommended by Circe (*Od.* 10.522).

Here first the priestess arranges four black-backed young bulls and she tips wine on their foreheads, and, plucking the topmost hairs in the middle between their horns, she places them on the sacred fires, the first offerings, calling aloud upon Hecate, powerful in the sky and in Erebus. Others apply knives and catch the warm blood in bowls. Aeneas himself with his sword strikes down a black-fleeced lamb for the mother of the Eumenides and her great sister, and a barren cow for you, Proserpina. Then he begins the nocturnal altars for the Stygian king, and places the entire flesh of the bulls on the flames, pouring rich oil over the burning entrails.

In both poems, a bull or bulls are sacrificed to Pluto, a cow to Proserpina, and young sheep either to the furies (Allecto and Megaera in Silius) or to their mother and her sister (Night and Earth in Virgil). Both narrators use direct address (*Pun.* 13.432; *Aen.* 6.251). Both sacrifices end with pouring liquids on top (*Pun.* 13.434; *Aen.* 6.254). Immediately after the sacrifices in both epics, the priestesses prepare the heroes for their encounter with the dead (*Pun.* 13.435–39; *Aen.* 6.255–61). In both passages, the seer shouts, addresses the hero (*iuuenis*, *Pun.* 13.435; *Aeneas*, *Aen.* 6. 261), gives orders in the form of imperatives (*Pun.* 13.435, 436, 441, 442; *Aen.* 6.260), urges the hero to be brave (*Pun.* 13.435–36, 442; *Aen.* 6.261), and commands him to draw his sword from its scabbard (*Pun.* 13.442; *Aen.* 6. 260); in both, *ecce* introduces the evidence of the nearing presence of the shades.⁴³

⁴³ Here are the similarities:

‘sta, iuuenis, faciemque Erebo quae surgit ab omni’
 exclamat uates ‘patere. accedentia cerno
 Tartara et ante oculos adsistere tertia regna.
ecce ruunt uariae species et quicquid ab ipso
 natum hominum extinctumque chaos est’ (iam cuncta uidebat,
 Cyclopas Scyllamque et pastos membra uirorum
 Odrysiac telluris equos); ‘contende tueri
 eductumque tene uagina interritus ensem.’ (*Pun.* 13.435–42)

“Stand firm, young man,” cries out the prophetess, “and endure the sight which arises from all Erebus. I see Tartarus approaching, and before our eyes the third kingdom takes up a position. Look! Varied forms rush forward and everything human which has been born or has died from chaos itself.” Now s/he was seeing everything, the Cyclopes and Scylla, and the horses of the Thracian land who fed on the limbs of men. “Strive to observe, and fearlessly hold your sword drawn from its sheath.”

ecce autem primi sub limina solis et ortus
 sub pedibus mugire solum et iuga coepta moueri
 siluarum, uisaeque canes ululare per umbram

Scipio's preparations before meeting the dead are also very similar to Odysseus' in many ways, but the motivation is different: Circe tells Odysseus he must visit the land of the dead before he returns home (*Od.* 10.490–91) to see Teiresias, who will tell him how to accomplish home-coming (*Od.* 10.492–95, 539–40); Odysseus' main purpose is not to see his dead relatives. But like Scipio and Aeneas, Odysseus goes to the land of the dead to receive a prophecy: Scipio goes because "his mind drives him to find out immediately the coming years" (*noscere uenturos agitat mens protinus annos*, *Pun.* 13.399); Anchises tells Aeneas he will learn about his family line and city (*Aen.* 5.737); and Teiresias will tell Odysseus about his journey home (*Od.* 10.539–40). Odysseus, unlike Scipio, Hannibal and Aeneas, has no guide to take him near the land of the dead (*Od.* 10.501–7); Circe gives him instructions (*Od.* 10.504–40), as Autonoë does to Scipio (*Pun.* 13.404–16), about how to approach the land of the dead (*Pun.* 13.413–16; *Od.* 10.505–15) and what to do when there (*Pun.* 13.404–12; *Od.* 10.516–40).⁴⁴ Both Autonoë and Circe prescribe offerings and describe a trench that the heroes must dig for the blood of animals (*Pun.* 13.404–8; *Od.* 10.517–37), and both refer the heroes' questions to a seer among the dead (the "greater Sibyl," *Pun.* 13.409–12; Teiresias, *Od.* 10.538–40).

When the heroes have come to the land of the dead, they do as they were instructed: each digs a pit with his sword⁴⁵ and makes offerings

aduentante dea. 'procul, o procul este, profani,'
conclamat uates, 'totoque absistite luco;
tuque inuade uiam uaginaque eripe ferrum:
nunc animis opus, Aenea, nunc pectore firmo.' (*Aen.* 6.255–61)

But look! Just before the threshold and rising of the first sunlight, the ground rumbled under their feet, and the ridges of the woods began to shake, and dogs seemed to howl through the shadow as the goddess was approaching. "Be far, far away, uninitiated ones," cries out the prophetic, "withdraw from the entire grove; and you, Aeneas, boldly enter the path and seize your sword from its sheath: now you need courage, now a steady heart."

Spaltenstein (1990) 245 points out that Autonoë removes herself from the proceedings, when the ancient Sibyl approaches, as Deiphobe in Virgil separates Aeneas' companions from the encounter with the dead here at *Aen.* 6.258–59.

⁴⁴ Odysseus and Aeneas sail to the vicinity of the underworld (*Od.* 11.1–12; *Aen.* 6.1–5); Hannibal and Scipio are already nearby Cumae (*Pun.* 12.60; *Pun.* 13.397).

⁴⁵ Cf. *ferroque cauare refossam/ocius urget humum* ("And she urges him to hollow out the dug up earth with his sword without delay," *Pun.* 13.427–28); ἐγὼ δ' ἄορ ὄξυ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ/βόθρον ὄρυξ' ὅσσον τε πυγούσιον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα ("But, drawing my sharp sword from beside my thigh, I dug a hole about a cubit this way and that," *Od.* 11.24–25).

and sacrifices (*Pun.* 13.427–41; *Od.* 11.24–47).⁴⁶ In Virgil, the Sibyl told Aeneas to draw his sword (*Aen.* 6.260), and later, when he has already entered the underworld and sees monsters, he draws his sword out of fear (*Aen.* 6.290–91). Scipio and Odysseus, on the other hand, draw their swords to keep the ghosts from the blood.⁴⁷ In the *Aeneid*, it is Charon who keeps the ghosts separated (*Aen.* 6.313–16), since only the buried may cross the river Styx (*Aen.* 6.325–30). Like the ghosts thronging to drink the blood in the *Punica* and the *Odyssey*, the crowd of the unburied in the *Aeneid* rush forward, and they similarly comprise all of humanity.⁴⁸

Scipio and Odysseus meet with the dead but do not descend into the underworld, unlike Aeneas, who travels through it. For all three heroes, an unburied ghost is the first to speak to them: Appius Claudius (*Pun.*

⁴⁶ In the *Odyssey*, a cow is promised to the dead (*Od.* 11.30–31), as in the *Punica* a bull is sacrificed to Pluto and a cow to Proserpina (*Pun.* 13.429–31); in the *Odyssey*, sheep are sacrificed to Hades and Persephone (*Od.* 11.47), as they are to Allecto and Megaera in Silius (*Pun.* 13.432–33). Odysseus pours into the pit drink-offerings of honey, milk, wine and water, with barley sprinkled over top (*Od.* 11.26–28); Scipio pours honey, wine and milk over the sacrifices (*Pun.* 13.434).

⁴⁷ Autonoë tells Scipio to draw his sword and not to allow any of the spirits to drink the blood before the Sibyl does (*Pun.* 13.442–44); likewise Odysseus draws his sword and will not let any of the dead drink the blood before Teiresias (*Od.* 11.48–50), as Circe had told him (*Od.* 10.535–37).

⁴⁸ Virgil's list is close to Homer's:

huc omnis turba ad ripas effusa ruebat,
matres atque uiri defunctaque corpora uita
magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae,
impositique rogis iuuenes ante ora parentum (*Aen.* 6.305–8)

αἱ δ' ἀγέροντο
ψυχὰι ὑπὲξ Ἑρέβους νεκῶν κατατεθνηῶτων·
νύμφαι τ' ἡῖθεοί τε πολύτλητοί τε γέροντες
παρθενικαί τ' ἀταλαὶ νεοπενθέα θυμὸν ἔχουσαι,
πολλοὶ δ' οὐτάμενοι χαλκῆρεσιν ἐγχέησιν,
ἄνδρες ἀρήϊφοι, βεβρωτὰ μέγα τεύχε' ἔχοντες· (*Od.* 11.36–41)

The whole throng of the dead was rushing to this part of the bank, mothers, men, great-hearted heroes whose lives were ended, boys, unmarried girls and young men laid on the pyre before the faces of their parents.

The spirits of the perished dead gathered up out of Erebus: wives and youths and much-enduring old men and tender maidens bearing newly-mourning hearts, and many wounded by bronze-tipped spears, men slain by war, bearing gore-stained armor.

Virgil and Silius use the same verb, *ruebat* (*Aen.* 6.305), and *ruunt* (*Pun.* 13.438) for the rush of the dead.

13.449–87);⁴⁹ Palinurus (*Aen.* 6.337–83); and Elpenor (*Od.* 11.51–83). All three ghosts explain how they died and request burial (*Pun.* 13.457–65; *Aen.* 6.347–71; *Od.* 11.60–78); their request will be granted (*Pun.* 13.467–68; *Aen.* 6.367–81; *Od.* 11.66–78).

After this episode in the *Punica*, as we mentioned before, Autonoë sees the ancient Sibyl approaching and leaves (*Pun.* 13.488–93).⁵⁰ Both this ancient Sibyl and Teiresias drink the blood (*Pun.* 13.494–96; *Od.* 11.98–99). Silius' greater Sibyl, like Autonoë, also corresponds to Virgil's Sibyl, Deiphobe. Reitz has pointed out a further correspondence between Silius' greater Sibyl and Anchises, who both live in Elysium and show the heroes those souls who will affect Rome's future (*Pun.* 13.850–67; *Aen.* 6.756–889).⁵¹ Each of the three heroes receives a prophecy of his life, Scipio from the ancient Sibyl (*Pun.* 13.507–15), Aeneas from Deiphobe before he descends (*Aen.* 6.83–97), and Odysseus from Teiresias (*Od.* 11.100–37).⁵² The reaction of the three heroes to the prophecies is an acceptance of their fate (*Pun.* 13.517–18; *Aen.* 6.103–5; *Od.* 11.139) and a request for assistance in touring the underworld. Scipio asks the priestess to reveal the underworld by description (*Pun.* 13.519–22), Aeneas by a tour (*Aen.* 6.106–23, especially 109); and Odysseus asks advice on underworld protocol (*Od.* 11.140–44). The requests of Scipio and Aeneas are phrased similarly: both address the priestess as *uirgo* (*Pun.* 13.520; *Aen.* 6.104), and both use the verb *orare* followed by the reason why the request should be granted (*oro quando*, "I beg you, since . . .," *Pun.* 13.519; *Aen.* 6.106).

In the *Punica*, Scipio's question leads to a long description of the underworld (*Pun.* 13.523–612), followed by the approach of his mother (*Pun.* 13.613–14). In the *Odyssey*, Teiresias answers Odysseus' questions

⁴⁹ See Bassett (1963) on "the literary descent and philosophical connections of Scipio's disquisition" (73) about funeral customs (*Pun.* 13.468–87), including Virgil, Ovid, Lucan and Valerius Flaccus and the relation of this passage to Lucretius, especially book 3, and to Cicero's *Tusc.* 1.4.108 and 1.16.36.

⁵⁰ Autonoë stops Scipio from talking to Appius (*Pun.* 13.489–90), as Deiphobe had stopped Aeneas from looking at the pictures (*Aen.* 6.37), or when she had stopped him from talking further with Deiphobus (*Aen.* 6.539–40).

⁵¹ Reitz (1982) 15–16. Anchises tells Aeneas that he dwells in the *Elysiumque* (*Aen.* 5.735); Autonoë tells Scipio that the answers of the ancient Sibyl will come from *Elysio . . . campo* ("the Elysian field," *Pun.* 13.410). The Sibyl says that while alive she prophesied *te permixtum saeculis rebusque futuris/Aeneadum* ("that in due time over the centuries you would participate in the future fortunes of the descendants of Aeneas," *Pun.* 13.499–500); in Virgil, Anchises shows Aeneas the *Scipiadae* (*Aen.* 6.842–43).

⁵² Anchises also tells Aeneas of the coming wars in Italy (*Aen.* 6.890–92).

briefly (*Od.* 11.146–49), and then the hero speaks with the ghost of his mother (*Od.* 11.155–224). In Silius, the Sibyl's description of the landscape and the inhabitants corresponds to much of what Aeneas sees on his path through the underworld until he meets his father (*Aen.* 6.268–678). In particular, the narrative device of the hero's question provoking a description can be seen just before Aeneas and Deiphobe move on to Elysium and Anchises, when Aeneas looks towards Tartarus and asks for further details (*Aen.* 6.560–61). As in Silius, the Sibyl then describes what the hero cannot see (*Aen.* 6.562–627).

In Silius, the Sibyl's description begins with two general observations, that the place is not one to be desired (*non optanda recludis/regna, Pun.* 13.523–24), and that everyone will come there eventually (*Pun.* 13.524–30). Deiphobe similarly called Aeneas' plan to visit the underworld a "labor of madness" (*insano...labori, Aen.* 6.135).⁵³ According to the Sibyl in the *Punica*, there are ten gates in the underworld that receive various groups of people (*Pun.* 13.523–61). In the *Aeneid*, there are gates associated with a few of the different groups (*porta, Aen.* 6.552; *portas*, 631; *limine*, 427), but these groups are less schematized. The *Odyssey* mentions the gates of Hades, but not with reference to the different groups of people.⁵⁴

The closest correspondence to Silius' description of the *decem portae* (*Pun.* 13.531) is located in Virgil's description of the five groups of those who died prematurely (*Aen.* 6.426–547). The list format is marked in both descriptive passages (ekphraseis); each new group is announced with words like "then" or "next."⁵⁵ Some of Silius' groups overlap with

⁵³ Both Sibyls warn of the undesirability of the place, but Scipio decides on his own to go (*Pun.* 13.393–99), while Aeneas is willingly obeying his father (*Aen.* 5.722–40); only Odysseus would rather die than go to Hades (*Od.* 10.497–98). When Odysseus is among the dead, Achilles rebukes the Ithacan hero for calling him blessed, because he is powerful among the dead (*Od.* 11.488–91). Even the suicides in Virgil would rather be alive (*Aen.* 6.436–37).

⁵⁴ εἰς Ἀΐδαο πυλάρταο κρατεροῖο ("Hades, the mighty gate-fastener," *Od.* 11.277); κατ' εὐρυπυλῆς Ἀΐδος δῶ ("by the wide-gated house of Hades," *Od.* 11.571); Ἀΐδαο πύλῃσι ("the gates of Hades," *Od.* 14.156).

⁵⁵ Cf. *quarum una* ("one of which," *Pun.* 13.531), *altera* ("another," 533), *tertia* ("a third," 535), *exin* ("the next," 537), *proxima* ("the next," 540), *finitima huic* ("most close to this," 542), *septima* ("the seventh," 545), *hinc* ("from there," 547), *tum* ("then," 550), *extrema hinc* ("the last one from there," 556); in Virgil, *continuo* ("immediately," *Aen.* 6.426), *hos iuxta* ("next to those," 430), *proxima deinde* ("the following," 434), *nec procul hinc* ("not far from there," 440), *inde...ultima* ("then...the last one," 477–78).

those in Virgil, though not in the same order.⁵⁶ Other groups in Silius can be compared to groups in Virgil's Elysian fields.⁵⁷ Virgil's description of the Elysian fields falls into two parts: the scene described by the narrator when Aeneas enters Elysium (*Aen.* 6.637–702) and the valley with the river Lethe, where Anchises explains to Aeneas what he sees (*Aen.* 6.703–751). Silius' second gate is for law-makers and city-founders, which Reitz compares to Romulus (*Aen.* 6.777–87), founder of Rome, and Numa (*Aen.* 6.808–12), the law-giver, in Anchises' presentation of the souls.⁵⁸ The Sibyl's description in Silius echoes Anchises' words about Numa (*Pun.* 13.533–34).⁵⁹ Silius recalls Virgil in describing the group of artists and poets, and the group of souls drinking from Lethe (*Pun.* 13.537–39, 552–55; *Aen.* 6.662–63, 713–15). Moreover, Silius' Sibyl's description of the tenth gate echoes Aeneas' question about the transmigration of souls, and Anchises' answer.⁶⁰

After the Sibyl's explanation of the ten gates, her description of the underworld continues with a list of five rivers (*Pun.* 13.562–78): the Phlegethon, Cocytus, Styx, Acheron, and the river of tears (*lacrimarum... amnis*, *Pun.* 13.577). In the *Odyssey*, Circe lists four rivers when giving directions to Odysseus.⁶¹ Silius echoes Virgil's descriptions of the four rivers that Aeneas sees as he tours the underworld.⁶²

In the underworld, Aeneas sees and Scipio hears the description of the personifications of evils, the monsters, and a huge tree with inhabitants clinging to its leaves (*Pun.* 13.579–600; *Aen.* 6.273–89). Some of the personifications are the same (*Luctus*, *Curæ*, *Senectus*, *Egestas*, and *Discordia*, in that order in each author) or similar (*Macies*, *Pun.* 13.581; *Fames*, *Aen.* 6.276). Silius includes the Furies (*Allecto*, *Megaera*, *Pun.* 13.592; *Eumenidum*, *Aen.* 6.280) with the monstrous creatures that

⁵⁶ E.g., cf. *Pun.* 13.532 ~ *Aen.* 6.477–547; *Pun.* 13.547–49 ~ *Aen.* 6.426–29; *Pun.* 13.542–44 ~ *Aen.* 6.430–33.

⁵⁷ Silius' third group, *rusticos*, *Cereris iustissima turba* ("country-folk, the most honest crowd dear to Ceres," *Pun.* 13.535) is absent in Virgil.

⁵⁸ Reitz (1982) 59. In Silius' ancient Sibyl's presentation of the souls there are also law-givers (*Pun.* 13.752–56).

⁵⁹ Austin (1977) 249 notes, "the priority is transferred to the city from the man, as in Silius 13.534."

⁶⁰ Cf. *Pun.* 13.558–59 ~ *Aen.* 6.719–21 and *Pun.* 13.558–59 ~ *Aen.* 6.748–51.

⁶¹ The Acheron, Phlegethon, Cocytus, and the Styx (*Od.* 10.513–14).

⁶² Cf. *Pun.* 13.563–65 ~ *Aen.* 6.550–51; *Pun.* 13.566–67 ~ *Aen.* 6.132; *Pun.* 13.568–70 ~ *Aen.* 6.323–24; *Pun.* 13.571–73 ~ *Aen.* 6.295–97.

the Sibyl describes after the personifications.⁶³ Both lists of monsters include Briareus, the Centaurs, the Scyllas, and others. Thus, as we have seen so far, the description of the underworld in Silius is very close to Virgil's underworld, a parallel which points to the similar experiences of Scipio and Aeneas.

A thrice-attempted hug links Scipio with both Aeneas and Odysseus, and also marks differences among the episodes. Odysseus attempts to embrace his mother; Aeneas, his father; and Scipio, first his mother, and then his father and uncle. The three passages all include a frustrated attempt and a double simile, but Silius has divided the echo between the end of Scipio's encounter with his mother's ghost, where the triple attempt occurs, and the beginning of his meeting with the souls of his father and uncle, where the souls are compared in a simile (*Pun.* 13.648–53; *Aen.* 6.700–2; *Od.* 11.204–8). And yet there are also some differences: Odysseus finds out from his mother how she died and how his father, son, and wife are doing (*Od.* 11.164–203); Aeneas learns from Anchises about his dear descendants (*caros... nepotes*, *Aen.* 6.682), Rome's future; and Scipio learns from his mother the story of his true origin from Jupiter (*Pun.* 13.634–47). Scipio's purpose in visiting the dead was to see his father and uncle, and from them he learns exactly how they died (*Pun.* 13.663–95). His desire to see them leads to his further understanding of his divine origins, as his rescue of his father at the battle of the Ticinus (*Pun.* 4.131–479) led to Mars' declaration of his descent from Jupiter (*Pun.* 4.472–77).

4. *Scipio's divine parentage*

The episode of Scipio's encounter with his mother's ghost establishes his divine lineage and so also his credentials as a semi-divine hero, like the legendary Aeneas and Hercules and the historical Alexander and Augustus. The opening verse of Scipio's meeting with his mother's ghost announces the theme: *adstabat fecunda Iouis Pomponia furto* ("standing near was Pomponia, productive because of the secret love of Jupiter," *Pun.* 13.615). Pomponia compares herself to Alcmena, the mother of Hercules, and to Leda, the mother of Castor and Pollux (*Alcidae*

⁶³ The adjective *uipeus* ("snake-like"), applied by Virgil to Discord's hair (*Aen.* 6.281), is used by Silius for Cerberus' tail (*Pun.* 13.594), in both cases as the first word of a five-word hexameter.

genetrix... *Leda*, *Pun.* 13.633), a comparison which highlights the parallel of Scipio with these heroes who had mortal mothers and Jupiter as a father, and who have experienced the underworld while alive.⁶⁴ Aeneas also points to his descent from Jupiter through Venus and gives the examples of the Dioscuri and Hercules (among others, *Aen.* 6.119–23) when he asks to visit his dead father: “Why should I mention Hercules? My descent too is from highest Jove” (*quid memorem Alciden? et mi genus ab Ioue summo*, *Aen.* 6.123).⁶⁵

In Mars’ announcement of Scipio’s divine parentage in *Punica* 4, Silius marks the connection of Scipio and Hercules as sons of Jupiter through a Virgilian echo. Mars hails Scipio as “true offspring of Jove” (*uera Iouis proles*, *Pun.* 4.476), repeating the address to Hercules in the hymn sung by the *Salii*, the priests of Mars, in *Aeneid* 8 (*uera Iouis proles*, *Aen.* 8.301).⁶⁶ By contrast, Hamilcar’s ghost receives Scipio’s news of Hannibal by hailing him as his own true offspring (*o uera propago*, *Pun.* 13.749); Hannibal’s origin is mortal. He is not a semi-divine hero in the same category as Scipio, Hercules, and their like. Scipio meets Alexander the Great in the underworld, another descendant of Heracles, as he claimed, and the son of Zeus Ammon.⁶⁷ Scipio addresses him as follows:

incipit Aeneades: ‘Libyci certissima proles
Hammonis...’ (*Pun.* 13.767–68)

The descendant of Aeneas begins: “Most definite offspring of Libyan Ammon...”

Silius’ phrase, *certissima proles* (*Pun.* 13.767), is repeated from *Aeneid* 6, where the Sibyl addresses Aeneas as *deum certissima proles* (“most definite offspring of the gods,” *Aen.* 6.322), tightening the web of associations among the heroes descended from Jupiter: Scipio, Aeneas, Hercules,

⁶⁴ On Pomponia in the poem, see Augoustakis (2008). Odysseus sees Alcmene (*Od.* 11.266–68) and Leda (*Od.* 11.298–304) in his encounter with famous women of the past, several of whom bore heroes, the offspring of gods.

⁶⁵ See Galinsky (1972) 131–49. In the *Odyssey*, Herakles, the last ghost with whom Odysseus speaks, compares himself to Odysseus in visiting the realm of Hades (*Od.* 11.617–26).

⁶⁶ In Virgil, only Aeneas and Hercules are addressed as *inuictus* (“unconquerable,” *Aen.* 6.365, 8.293); in Silius, only Hercules, Fabius, and Scipio (*Pun.* 1.512, 8.329, 17.651). Cicero (*Orat.* 152.9) quotes an address to Scipio as *inuictus* from Ennius.

⁶⁷ For this episode, see Borzsák (1982) and Tipping extensively in this volume (205–8).

and Alexander.⁶⁸ Scipio is known as the offspring of Jupiter from his first appearance in the action of the epic until its very last line, where he is specifically the offspring of the Tarpeian Thunderer, the very Roman Jupiter (*prolem Tarpei... Tonantis*, *Pun.* 17.654).

Pomponia's story of Scipio's conception (*Pun.* 13.637–44) resembles that of Alexander's, as Livy points out (26.19.7). Alexander's mother too was said to have been visited by Jupiter in the form of a snake (also in *Plut. Alex.* 2.4). Similarly, Augustus, who took Alexander as a model,⁶⁹ was said to have been conceived when his mother was visited by Apollo in the form of a snake, followed by the birth of Augustus nine months later (*Suet. Aug.* 94.4).

Scipio and Alexander are both known as young generals.⁷⁰ Throughout the epic and especially in *Punica* 13, Scipio is often called simply *iuuenis*,⁷¹ in the underworld Scipio first sees Alexander as an unnamed youth (*iuuenem*, *Pun.* 13.762). Scipio explicitly states that he wants to be like Alexander, and Alexander describes to him the qualities of boldness and speed that Scipio displays throughout the epic (*Pun.* 13.768–75). The quality of *uirtus* that Alexander mentions (*Pun.* 13.774) is Scipio's own choice in *Punica* 15 (18–130). This choice of *Virtus* over *Voluptas* marks Scipio as the true literary descendant of Hercules, whose choice of Ἀρετῇ over Κακία was told by Prodicus and preserved in Xenophon (*Mem.* 2.1.21–33).⁷²

When *Virtus* argues her case to Scipio, she cites the examples of semi-divine heroes like Hercules, Bacchus, the Dioscuri, and Quirinus (*Pun.* 15.77–83). These are the heroes whose number Scipio can join because of his divine parentage and his choice to follow the path of *Virtus*. Galinsky and Otis have shown the connections Virgil makes between Hercules, Aeneas, and Augustus.⁷³ Silius builds on this network of associations: like Virgil, the Flavian poet allows a parallel between his hero, Scipio, and his emperor, Domitian. Bassett has shown that

⁶⁸ The phrase *certissima proles* is found only at *Pun.* 13.767 and *Aen.* 6.322 (as well as in Servius' comment (*ad Aen.* 6.322 and 8.36), and in the *Ilias* 236. See Ripoll (2002) 949 for the omen preceding the battle of the Ticinus (*Pun.* 4.1.1–142) and this scene.

⁶⁹ See *Suet. Aug.* 18.1, 50, 94.5.

⁷⁰ For Alexander, the "*eroico generale*" in this episode, see Cresci Marrone (1983–84), especially 91–93.

⁷¹ Scipio is called *iuuenis* eleven times in *Punica* 13. See also Marks (2005a) *passim*.

⁷² See Bassett (1966) 258–73, as well as Asso (189–90) and Tipping (209–11) in this volume.

⁷³ See Galinsky (1972) 281–87, especially p. 284, and Otis (1964) 330–43.

Scipio is the successor of Hercules in the *Punica*, and both Scipio and Domitian are compared to Hercules.⁷⁴

Pointing out Alexander to Scipio, the Sibyl identifies him by his conquests, some of which strongly suggest the conquests of Augustus and Domitian (*Pun.* 13.763–66). Alexander's conquest of the Dahae might recall Augustus' and its representation on the shield of Aeneas (*Aen.* 8.728), especially since there is a further connection in this line between Alexander and Augustus, who both built a bridge over the river Araxes, according to Servius.⁷⁵ The Niphates might also recall Augustus' military campaigns (*G.* 3.30, *Hor. Carm.* 2.9.20). The references to Bactra and the Ganges might also recall Domitian's triumphs foretold by Jupiter in his prophecy in *Punica* 3 (612–13), the only other place in the *Punica* where Bactra is actually mentioned. These allusions are part of the network of associations that raises Scipio's standing as a hero.

Scipio's visit to the land of the dead is a "symbolic investiture," as Conte has called it.⁷⁶ He is marked as a hero by the repetition of the trips of Aeneas, Odysseus and other heroes, most notably, Hercules. It is in the underworld that Scipio hears the story of his origin from Jupiter, which puts him into the category of semi-divine heroes, and gives him the status which Hannibal lacks. Through Silius' portrayal of Scipio as these heroes from the epic tradition, Scipio becomes the exemplary hero of the *Punica*.

⁷⁴ Bassett (1966) discusses Scipio as Hercules, but not what the implications of this parallelism are for a comparison of Scipio to Aeneas. Martial refers to Domitian as *maiolem Alciden* (9.64.6), and *Alcides maior* (9.101.11); cf. 9.101.1 and 9.65.1–2.

⁷⁵ Cf. Servius *ad Aen.* 8.728: "Araxes: This is a river of Armenia which Xerxes struggled to cross over with bridges. Alexander the Great built a bridge over it which the rising of the river burst. Later Augustus spanned it with a stronger bridge, and so he said 'Araxes, having scorned a bridge' for the glory of Augustus" (*Araxes hic fluvius Armeniae, quem pontibus nisus est Xerxes conscendere. cui Alexander Magnus pontem fecit, quem fluminis incrementa ruperunt. postea Augustus firmiore ponte eum ligavit, unde ad Augusti gloriam dixit 'pontem indignatus Araxes'*). But as Fordyce (1977) 287 notes, "Antony had crossed it in 36 BC on his Parthian expedition and had recrossed it in defeat: Augustus was never in the region and the statement in Servius that he bridged the Araxes is an invention based on Virgil's words."

⁷⁶ Conte (1994) 494.

CHAPTER SIX

SILIUS AND LUCAN

Raymond Marks

1. *Introduction*

The relationship between Silius and Lucan is often viewed as one of contrasts and differences, a characterization to which there is a good amount of truth. Silius embraces the commemorative function of epic and subscribes to its ancient dictate, to sing of κλέα ἀνδρῶν (“the fame of men”), and taps into the exemplary power of epic poetry, its capacity to hold up the virtues of its heroes and the vices of its villains for readers to emulate and avoid, respectively. To that end, he offers a strongly marked moral vision: on the whole, the Romans exhibit faithfulness (*fides*), the Carthaginians faithlessness (*perfidia*), and Rome’s final victory testifies to the strength of her traditional values and moral character. Contrast the twisted, sinister world of the *De bello civili*, where martial valor is a suspect ideal, victory a shameful outcome, and hardly anyone is innocent of crimes against his fellow citizens. These contrasts reflect, to be sure, a difference in subject matter: Silius writes about a constructive moment in history, in which Rome fights through adversity against a foreign foe to set herself on a path toward empire, and the mechanisms of fate and divine governance work hand in hand to help her achieve that goal; Lucan writes about a destructive or, rather, self-destructive moment, in which Rome turns on herself, a process sometimes dictated by the forces of fate, sometimes by materialistic chance, and almost always by the crooked, misguided desires of the human heart. Even so, it is important to remember that Silius did not have to make the choice he did—other topics were available to him—yet he still chose to write about a war that does not lend itself well to Lucan’s largely pessimistic approach. Moreover, while there should be a natural affiliation between the *Punica* and the *De bello civili* in that their themes are war, their subject matter historical, and their

heroes many, the epic predecessor with whom Silius most conspicuously identifies himself from the start is not Lucan, but Virgil.¹

There is, however, one topic that Silius and Lucan have in common: civil war.² Silius has deep concerns about Rome's history of civil strife, and it is principally through Lucan that he gives voice to them.³ Also, while Lucan's influence may not seem considerable, that is only because it is not as conspicuously marked as, say, Virgil's. Lucan often simmers under the surface of the *Punica*; he can be found in details, a motif, a name, an allusion, and as the reader enumerates these instances, and as patterns of reference begin to emerge, it becomes clear that his presence is much more pervasive and more integral to the big ideas and themes of the *Punica* than it appears on first glance. That Silius is an "anti-Lucan," and his epic an "anti-*Pharsalia*," as some have said, is, therefore, a misleading simplification, no less than the claim that Lucan himself is an "anti-Virgil" and his epic an "anti-*Aeneid*."⁴ In fact, if we peer a little beyond the proem with its Virgilian (and, of course, Livian) echoes, Lucan's influence begins to manifest itself. As Silius sets out to explain the causes of the conflict between Rome and Carthage, he alludes to the beginning of Lucan's exposition of the causes of civil war: *tantarum causas irarum odiumque perenni/seruatum studio et mandata nepotibus arma/fas aperire mihi superasque recludere mentes* ("it is right for me to explain the causes of such great anger, the hatred they nurtured with constant zeal, and

¹ For Silius' identification with Virgil in the proem, see von Albrecht (1964) 16–24, Kißel (1979) 30–32, Küppers (1986) 22–60, Laudizi (1989) 57–70, Ripoll (1998a) 236–38, and Marks (2005c) 529–30. It may be, however, that Silius' use of *iura* ("laws," *Pun.* 1.2) and *bella* ("wars," *Pun.* 1.4) in the proem is meant to remind us of Lucan's proem; on this possibility, see Tipping (2004) 348–49.

² See also Tipping's analysis in this volume: "In the epic figuration of Lucan's *De bello civili*, the insanity of civil war is epitomized as a contest between the competitive Pompey and Caesar. Silius takes for his subject matter the heyday of republican Rome, but collapse into civil war and the emergence of the empire, which the emperor of Silius' contemporary Rome most obviously instantiates, are woven into the poem's text" (217–18).

³ Silius' concerns will become clear as the evidence for his use of Lucan is examined in this chapter, but it should be noted that he does refer, sometimes quite explicitly, to Rome's moral decline and experience of civil war after the war: *Pun.* 3.588–90, 9.346–53, 10.657–58, 13.853–67, 15.124–27.

⁴ For a survey of such opinions on Silius' relation to Lucan, see Marks (2005a) 274 n. 102. Among those who have been more willing to see similarities and connections between Silius and Lucan, rather than differences and contrasts, are Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986), McGuire (1995) and (1997), Dominik (2003), and Tipping (2004) and (2007).

the hostilities they handed down to their descendants, and to reveal the intentions of the gods,” *Pun.* 1.17–19);⁵ *fert animus causas tantarum expromere rerum, / immensumque aperitur opus, quid in arma furem / impulerit populum* (“my mind leads me to disclose the causes of such great events, and a huge undertaking is begun, to disclose what drove the maddened people to arms,” *Luc.* 1.67–69).⁶ Soon after, when describing Juno’s fear of the Romans’ growing power, Silius echoes Lucan’s description of Caesar’s return from Spain: *totum signa uidet uictricia ferre per orbem* (“she sees [Rome’s fleets] bearing victorious standards throughout the world,” *Pun.* 1.31); *uictrices aquilas alium laturus in orbem* (“about to bear his victorious standards to another land,” *Luc.* 5.237–38). And in his character portrait of Hannibal, the Flavian poet identifies the Carthaginian with Lucan’s Caesar: *armato nullus diuum pudor, improba uirtus* (“when armed, he has no respect for the gods, his valor is restless,” *Pun.* 1.58); *sed nescia uirtus / stare loco, solusque pudor non uincere bello* (“but his valor does not know how to stand still, and the only thing shameful to him is not to be victorious in battle,” *Luc.* 1.144–45). What we are about to read is the story of the Second Punic War, but by allusion we are invited to do so with an eye to Rome’s history of civil war and to Lucan’s *De bello ciuili* in particular.

Silius’ allusions to Lucan are many and varied in their function and purpose, but two major trends can be observed. First, they chart the broad trajectory of the shifting fortunes of each side in the war: in books 1–10, where the Carthaginians mostly have the upper hand, allusions to Lucan regularly identify the Romans and their allies with those who suffer, are defeated, or are killed in civil war; whereas in books 11–17, where the Romans mostly have the upper hand, it is the Carthaginians who are so identified. Second, the allusions invite us to read the beginning of each phase or seminal events within it in

⁵ Translations are mine.

⁶ Some allusions discussed in this chapter I have discovered myself, but many have already been pointed out by others. Of particular note are the following resources: Wezel (1873) 89–95, Hosius (1907) 4–16, Steele (1922) 326–30, Meyer (1924), Vinchesi (1976) 56–58, Häussler (1978) 161–77, Brouwers (1982), Spaltenstein (1986) and (1990), Ariemma (2004). I regret that I cannot acknowledge the contributions of these scholars and others in every instance, but an effort has been made to direct the reader to further literature in the case of passages that are extensively allusive or when a specific interpretation is closely tied to an allusion and is thought relevant. Also, as a comprehensive treatment of Silius’ debt to Lucan is not possible, the evidence presented here is necessarily selective and represents only a small fraction of the total number of parallels between the authors.

connection with ‘beginnings’ or ‘firsts’ in the *De bello civili* and to read the end of each phase in connection with the death and decapitation of Pompey in *De bello civili* 8. On an allusive level, therefore, the civil war between Caesar and Pompey is replayed twice, from start to finish, in the *Punica*, first during Rome’s decline in books 1–10, then during Carthage’s decline in books 11–17.

This allusive strategy is evident in the first armed conflict of the *Punica*, the siege of Saguntum. When a Saguntine named Murrus, who is the first individual, after Hannibal, mentioned during the siege, mocks a defeated foe for thinking that he might one day scale the Capitoline in Rome, he alludes to the proem of the *De bello civili*: *quae tanta licentia uoti?* (“what license is this to make vows?” *Pun.* 1.385); *quae tanta licentia ferri?* (“what license is this with the sword?” *Luc.* 1.8). Four lines later, when taunting another foe, Murrus echoes the words of the people of Ariminum, the first city Caesar threatens in the *De bello civili*, when they complain of being always the first to face invaders of Italy: *‘hac iter est’ inquit ‘uobis ad moenia Romae’* (“by this route,” he said, “is your way to the walls of Rome,” *Pun.* 1.389); *quotiens Romam Fortuna lacescit, / hac iter est bellis* (“whenever Fortune has challenged Rome, by this route is the way to war,” *Luc.* 1.256–57).⁷ Later, Hannibal rebukes Murrus for delaying his war against Rome and in doing so echoes Lucan’s description of Crassus, who, while alive, forestalled the outbreak of hostilities between Caesar and Pompey: *Romani Murrus belli mora* (“Murrus, a hindrance to my war on Rome,” *Pun.* 1.479); *Crassus erat belli medius mora* (“Crassus was, in the middle, a hindrance to war,” *Luc.* 1.100). And in his last words Murrus prays that Hercules, the patron god of Saguntum, not be displeased with his “rivaling virtue,” an allusion to the “rivaling virtue” that set Caesar and Pompey at odds with one another according to Lucan: *ni displicet aemula uirtus* (“unless my rivaling virtue is displeasing,” *Pun.* 1.510); *stimulos dedit aemula uirtus* (“rivaling virtue goaded [them] on,” *Luc.* 1.120). As we can see, in these early moments of the first conflict of the *Punica*, we are taken back to ‘beginnings’ or ‘firsts’ in Lucan’s epic, the proem, Ariminum, the first city to face Caesar, and two causes of civil war, Crassus’ death and Caesar’s and Pompey’s *aemula uirtus*. By these allusions Silius

⁷ Note that reference is made to the invasion of Hannibal in the previous line: *Martem Libyes* (“the war of Africa,” *Luc.* 1.255). Also, cf. *Aen.* 6.542, 9.321.

encourages us to read what follows in close relation to Lucan's epic and to expect, in particular, that the war he recounts will mirror in certain respects a civil war.

A set of allusions toward the end of book 1 reinforce this expectation. When the Saguntine ambassador Sicoris arrives in Rome to ask the senate for help against Hannibal, his speech begins with an echo of Lucan's complaint about Ptolemy's decision to have Pompey murdered: *quo tua nunc sunt/fata loco?* ("where does your fate now stand?" *Pun.* 1.598–99); *quo tua sit fortuna loco* ("where your fortune now stands," *Luc.* 8.558). The allusion unflatteringly identifies the Roman senate with the Egyptian king and hints that if Rome does not help her ally, her inaction would be tantamount to betrayal and dire consequences will follow, just as for Ptolemy who, after betraying his former ally Pompey, was dethroned by Julius Caesar and died soon after. Two other ominous moments follow in Sicoris' speech. First, there is his identification of Saguntum as the cradle of an incipient war, which echoes Lucan's exposition of the causes of civil war: *si nullus terror, non obruta iam nunc/semina fumarent belli* ("if there were no cause to fear, if the hidden seeds of war were not already fuming now," *Pun.* 1.653–54); *suberant sed publica belli/semina* ("but there were public seeds of war at hand," *Luc.* 1.158–59; cf. *Luc.* 3.150). Second, Sicoris' plea that Hannibal be kept far from Rome and be contained in Spain alludes to Cato's wish that he not remain safe while Rome falls: *procul his a moenibus, oro, / arcete, o superi, nostroque in Marte tenete/fatiferæ iuuenem dextrae* ("keep far away from these walls, I beg, o gods, and keep involved in war with us the young leader and his lethal hand," *Pun.* 1.639–41); *procul hunc arcete pudorem, / o superi, motura Dahae ut clade Getasque/seculo me Roma cadat* ("keep this shame far away, o gods, that Rome should fall and by her destruction motivate the Dahae and Getae while I remain safe," *Luc.* 2.295–97). All of these allusions make it clear that Rome needs to confront the Hannibalic menace in Spain and that if she does not, she will have a war, a kind of civil war, on her hands at home. Rome, however, does not address the Saguntine issue satisfactorily; she pursues a policy of cautious diplomacy and in doing so not only fails to check Hannibal's progress and leaves her ally Saguntum for dead, but unwittingly brings war upon herself. This outcome is hinted at in Silius' report of the senate's decision, which contains an allusion to Pompey's plea to his men to give up the fight at Pharsalus: *si perstet surdus in armis/pactorum* ("if he should continue under arms, deaf to an armistice," *Pun.* 1.692–93); *qui perstet in armis* ("who should continue

under arms," Luc. 7.690).⁸ It is not long, in fact, before this allusive strategy in book 1 pays dividends. Saguntum's fall at the end of book 2 is a self-destructive event that resembles civil war: her citizens turn on themselves, committing internecine slaughter and suicide to avoid being captured by Hannibal.⁹

2. *Rome's 'civil war': Punica 4–10*

The story of Saguntum not only marks the first step in Hannibal's campaign against Rome, but anticipates major themes and motifs to follow in the epic. The city, for example, is depicted as a kind of mirror-image of Rome, and Hannibal's attack on her walls as a prefiguration of his attack on the walls of Rome herself.¹⁰ Saguntum foreshadows another aspect of Rome's story, the self-destructive nature of her defeats in books 4–10. What I mean by this is not that Rome intentionally destroys herself, but that the city repeatedly takes measures that undermine her chances of success and unwittingly precipitates her own defeats in that way.¹¹ This is seen most conspicuously in the reckless attempts of her generals to oppose Hannibal (the elder Scipio and Sempronius in book 4, Flaminius in book 5, Minucius in book 7, Varro in books 8–9), but is also evident in Rome's mismanagement of the war, which is often the product of internal discord (1.672–94, 5.114–16, 7.511–16, 8.242–48, 9.1–65), and in those Romans who attempt or consider suicide (4.454–71, 5.655–66, 9.173–77, 9.649–51), all signs of a city collapsing in on itself.¹² Silius' allusions to Lucan do their part as well, pointing to the self-destructive nature of Rome's plight, just as they did in Saguntum's story. Silius even uses the same technique he employed before to lay the groundwork for this intertex-

⁸ On the senate's mishandling of the Saguntine situation, see Dominik (2003) 480–85.

⁹ For Saguntum's fall as evoking civil strife, see McGuire (1997) 211–19 and Dominik (2003) 485–96.

¹⁰ So, von Albrecht (1964) 24–27 and Dominik (2003) 474–80. Saguntum may even be viewed as a kind of sacrificial substitute for Rome; see McGuire (1997) 209–10, Dominik (2003) 479, and Marks (2005c) 533–34.

¹¹ For the self-destruction theme in the epic, see Marks (2005b).

¹² For the self-destructive behavior of Rome's generals, see Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2520–23, Marks (2005a) 17–20 and Marks (2005b) 131–33. For the instances of internal discord, see Marks (2005a) 277–78 and n. 27, below. For the suicides, see Marks (2005b) 133–34, 139.

tual program: allusions to ‘beginnings’ or ‘firsts’ in Lucan’s epic are strategically placed at the beginning of this new phase.

Consider the battle at the Ticinus river in *Punica* 4, the first armed conflict between Rome and Hannibal in the epic. Before the battle, the Roman seer Liger correctly interprets a bird omen (*Pun.* 4.105–19) to mean that Rome will suffer at the hands of Hannibal for many years, but will win the war in the end (*Pun.* 4.120–30). Next, a Carthaginian seer, named Bogus, wrongly interprets the omen to portend victory for Hannibal and throws a spear in the direction of the Roman lines (*Pun.* 4.131–35). A Roman named Catus then rides headlong into the path of the spear, is struck by it, and is killed; the spear, we are told, never would have reached or harmed any of the Romans, had Catus not ridden out to meet it (*Pun.* 4.136–42). Immediately thereafter, the battle at the Ticinus begins. As the first Roman death in the war and as a self-destructive act, Catus’ demise foreshadows Rome’s self-destructive defeats to follow in books 4–10. This point is also underlined by the allusiveness of his name: the first character killed in the first battle of Lucan’s epic is named Catus, who dies at the beginning of the battle at Massilia (Luc. 3.585–91).¹³ And so that we do not forget about his death and its civil war associations, Silius alludes to the death of Lucan’s Catus several times elsewhere in the book.¹⁴ In the Ticinus battle itself, we encounter a cluster of allusions to another ‘first’ in the *De bello civili*, Caesar’s crossing of the Rubicon, which is recalled in the consul Scipio’s attempt to rally his troops: *quo signa refertis?* (“where are you taking the standards?” *Pun.* 4.402); *quo fertis mea signa, uiri?* (“where are you taking my standards, men?” Luc. 1.191); *ipsam turrigeros portantem uertice muros* (“[Rome] herself wearing on her head towered walls,” *Pun.* 4.408); *turrigero canos effundens uertice crines* (“[Rome] pouring down white hair from her towered head,” Luc. 1.188); *Vestalesque focos* (“and Vestal hearths,” *Pun.* 4.411); *Vestalesque foci* (“and Vestal hearths,” Luc. 1.199). By these allusions Silius suggests that the war between Rome and Carthage, which gets under way in this book, will be a kind of civil war or, perhaps, a pre-play, so to speak, of Rome’s civil wars later in her history.¹⁵

¹³ For more on Catus’ death and this allusion, see Marks (2005a) 16–17 and Marks (2005b) 130–31.

¹⁴ *Pun.* 4.30–31 = Luc. 3.584–85; *Pun.* 4.109 = Luc. 3.591; *Pun.* 4.568–72 = Luc. 3.588–91.

¹⁵ On prolepsis and analepsis, see Harrison in this volume (279–92).

Allusions to Lucan continue to underline the self-destructive nature of Rome's defeats in subsequent books. For example, Flaminius' incautious encounter with Hannibal at Trasimene contains many allusions to Curio's foolhardy campaign in Africa, especially his defeat at the hands of Juba, and his last words to his troops during the battle grimly echo the punishment Julius Caesar demands of his mutinous troops: *disce ex me pugnas, uel si pugnare negatum, / disce mori* ("learn from me how to fight, or if you cannot fight, learn how to die," *Pun.* 5.637–38); *disce ferire, / disce mori* ("learn how to strike, learn how to die," *Luc.* 5.363–64).¹⁶ Also, in the aftermath of the defeat, at the beginning of book 6, the sight of the dead Laevinus, who in his martial frenzy had resorted to cannibalism during the battle, occasions a set of allusions that invite us to compare his atrocity with the kind of boundary violation that civil war engenders and represents.¹⁷ The pattern is temporarily broken, however, by the dictatorship of Fabius Maximus, who uses delaying tactics to slow down the war, to frustrate Hannibal, and to save Roman lives. It is only fitting, then, that he should remind us of a more positive figure in Lucan's epic, Cato, when he declares that he is willing to die in place of his countrymen: *me solum, quaeso, toti me opponite bello* ("please, set me, me alone, against the whole war," *Pun.* 7.252); *me solum inuadite ferro* ("attack me alone with the sword," *Luc.* 2.315).¹⁸ And when the Roman senate splits Fabius' command with the *magister equitum* Minucius, a bad decision that is underlined as such by an allusion to Lucan's Pompey (*popularibus auris*, "popular favor," *Pun.* 7.512; *popularibus auris*, *Luc.* 1.132),¹⁹ Fabius does not give up on Rome

¹⁶ The battle at Trasimene and Curio's African campaign: *Pun.* 5.208–9 = *Luc.* 4.793–94; *Pun.* 5.219 = *Luc.* 4.624, 783; *Pun.* 5.535–36 = *Luc.* 4.767; *Pun.* 5.660 = *Luc.* 4.770.

¹⁷ *Pun.* 6.43 = *Luc.* 6.146; *Pun.* 6.45 = *Luc.* 3.500; *Pun.* 6.47 = *Luc.* 3.671; *Pun.* 6.49–51 = *Luc.* 2.183–85; *Pun.* 6.54 = *Luc.* 3.634, 4.425. Several of these allusions are discussed by Bassett (1959) 23–29.

¹⁸ The emergence of this 'Cato' is anticipated in book 6 by the excursus on Regulus, who resembles Cato in several respects too and otherwise foreshadows Fabius. Yet the Regulus excursus also contains many allusions to Curio's African campaign in *Luc.* 4, and Regulus himself, therefore, may be considered, on an allusive level at least, a transitional figure between Flaminius in book 5 and Fabius in book 7. For allusions to the *De bello civili* in *Punica* 6, see Bassett (1955) 4–9, Brouwers (1982) 78–81, Fröhlich (2000) 404, and Ripoll (2000a) 9–11. Silius identifies not only Regulus with Cato, but also Regulus' wife with Cato's wife, both named Marcia; on this, see Augoustakis (2006) 148–54. For the connection between Regulus and Fabius, see Bassett (1955) and Kißel (1979) 122–23.

¹⁹ Cf. *Aen.* 6.816.

and in a colloquy with his son (*Pun.* 7.536–65), which is reminiscent of the exchange between Cato and Brutus (*Luc.* 2.234–325), explains that one must never bear a grudge against one's country. Fabius goes on to save Minucius' army from defeat at Hannibal's hands (*Pun.* 7.580–729).

Rome soon returns, however, to her self-destructive ways, and as the battle of Cannae unfolds in *Punica* 8–10, allusions to Lucan become increasingly numerous. Before the battle, we encounter several allusions to *De bello civili* 1 and to the battle at Pharsalus in *De bello civili* 7. The omens that portend Rome's defeat (*Pun.* 8.622–55) recall those that attend the beginning of the civil war (*Luc.* 1.522–83) and those that precede the Pharsalus battle (*Luc.* 7.151–84).²⁰ The Roman soldier who rattles on about the disaster to come (*Pun.* 8.656–76) is based on Lucan's inspired *matrona*, who foretells the events of the civil war (*Luc.* 1.673–95).²¹ At the beginning of book 9 a reference to the fear the omens were causing throughout Italy contains a clausula that Lucan uses to describe the fear Caesar's invasion caused in Italy (*cladisque futurae*, “future destruction,” *Pun.* 9.1; *clademque futuram*, *Luc.* 1.470), while the dispute between Paulus and Varro before the battle (*Pun.* 9.23–65) is broadly reminiscent of the exchange between Cicero and Pompey before the Pharsalus battle (*Luc.* 7.62–127).²²

In the battle itself we encounter more allusions to *De bello civili* 1. For example, the description of the Vulturian wind alludes to Lucan's description of a solar eclipse in the omens: *ipse caput flauum caligine conditus atra/Vulturnus* (“Vulturnus himself, his fair head hidden in black darkness,” *Pun.* 9.513–14); *ipse caput medio Titan cum ferret Olympo/condidit ardentis atra caligine currus* (“when Titan himself raised his head into the midst of Olympus, he hid his flaming chariot in black darkness,” *Luc.* 1.540–41). When Paulus recognizes that the battle is going badly for

²⁰ The correspondences between these omens are mostly in type, but there are a few verbal parallels as well: *Pun.* 8.624–25 = *Luc.* 7.151–52; *Pun.* 8.636–37 = *Luc.* 1.528–29; *Pun.* 8.638–39 = *Luc.* 1.559. For more on the parallels between these omens, see Fuccocchi (1999) 323–24 and Ariemma (2000a) 138–43. The omens before the battle at Trasimene (*Pun.* 5.53–76) also recall Lucan's omens at points.

²¹ For discussion, see Ariemma (2000a) 143–44. Other than the verb *uideo* appearing in the same metrical *sedes* of the second line of each speech (*Pun.* 8.660 = *Luc.* 1.679), there are few verbal parallels between them. The soldier's plea to the gods to spare the Romans does recall, however, Pompey's plea to the gods to put an end to the carnage at Pharsalus (*Pun.* 8.659 = *Luc.* 7.659). Also, *Pun.* 8.673 = *Luc.* 1.286.

²² Fuccocchi (1999) 327–29. Also, *Pun.* 9.51 = *Luc.* 1.363; *Pun.* 9.77 = *Luc.* 7.527. See also Ariemma in this volume (253–54).

the Romans at the beginning of book 10, he resembles Caesar after crossing the Rubicon: *Paulus, ut aduersam uidet increbrescere pugnam* ("Paulus, when he sees the fighting swell up in front of him," *Pun.* 10.1); *Caesar, ut aduersam superato gurgite ripam/attigit* ("Caesar, when he touched the opposite bank, the river crossed," *Luc.* 1.223–24). And the simile in which the deaths of Crista and his sons are compared to an oak felled by lightning (*Pun.* 10.164–69) recalls both the oak simile applied to Pompey (*Luc.* 1.136–43) and the lightning simile applied to Caesar (*Luc.* 1.151–57).²³ During the battle Silius alludes to the battle at Pharsalus in *De bello ciuili* 7 as well. The comparison of the conflict to Jupiter's battle with the Giants (*Pun.* 9.305–9) is modeled after Lucan's gigantomachy simile at the beginning of that battle (*Luc.* 7.145–50).²⁴ When Silius praises the Romans who are going to die at Cannae and, paradoxically, asserts that Rome will never be greater than in that defeat (*Pun.* 9.340–53), he echoes Lucan's reflections on the Pharsalus battle, in which a similar paradox is introduced: the evils perpetrated there were such that it was better to be defeated than to be victorious (*Luc.* 7.698–711).²⁵ There are still many other allusions.²⁶

What adds to the atmosphere of civil war in the Cannae books is that Silius outfits his narrative with other kinds of references to and suggestions of civil war. There are, for example, several instances where the distinction between friend and foe is blurred, a phenomenon characteristic of civil strife, and allusions to Lucan on these occasions reinforce that very point. When Fabius tries to convince Paulus not to join Varro in opposing Hannibal at Cannae, he describes Varro as an enemy in the Roman camp and echoes Pompey imploring his men to stop fighting at Pharsalus because the battle is lost: *Ausoniae te proelia dira/teque hostis castris grauior manet* ("a deadly battle and a more threatening enemy in the Roman camp await you," *Pun.* 8.300–1; cf. *Pun.* 9.175, 17.397); *fuge proelia dira* ("avoid deadly battle," *Luc.* 7.689;

²³ Marks (2006) 400–2. Also, see Marks (2006) for other civil war references and allusions to Lucan in the Crista episode. Other allusions to *Luc.* 1 in the battle include: *Pun.* 9.286 = *Luc.* 1.371 (cf. *Luc.* 3.631); *Pun.* 9.461–62 = *Luc.* 1.154; *Pun.* 9.486 = *Luc.* 1.391; *Pun.* 10.139 = *Luc.* 1.585–86; *Pun.* 10.182–83 = *Luc.* 1.624–25.

²⁴ Silius alludes to this simile elsewhere too: *Pun.* 9.442–43 = *Luc.* 7.149; *Pun.* 17.649 = *Luc.* 7.145.

²⁵ This connection is also anchored by verbal parallels in *Pun.* 9.350–51 and *Luc.* 7.707–8.

²⁶ E.g., *Pun.* 9.324 = *Luc.* 7.573; *Pun.* 9.468–69 = *Luc.* 7.483–84; *Pun.* 10.30 = *Luc.* 7.408; *Pun.* 10.74–75 = *Luc.* 7.492–93; *Pun.* 10.167 = *Luc.* 7.160; *Pun.* 10.223 = *Luc.* 7.101.

cf. Luc. 3.312–13).²⁷ In his response to Fabius, Paulus characterizes himself as Rome's consul and Varro as Carthage's (*Pun.* 8.332–33) and then says that "Varro is dragging everything down with himself" (*trahit omnia secum*, *Pun.* 8.333); this recalls Pompey when he realizes that the battle at Pharsalus is lost: *nec, sicut mos est miseris, trahere omnia secum/ mersa iuuat* ("nor is he happy, as the wretched are wont, to drown and drag everything down with himself," Luc. 7.654–55). And when Paulus and Varro part ways in disagreement, they go to their own separate camps rather than join forces before the battle; this reflects the internal divisions civil war causes in a society, as an allusion to the Romans choosing sides in the war between Caesar and Pompey shows: *sic tum diuersa turbati mente petebant/ castra duces* ("then in this way the leaders, agitated and of different minds, went to their camps," *Pun.* 8.349–50); *nec non bella uiri diuersaque castra petentes* ("and the men going to war and different camps," Luc. 2.43). Finally, when the prophetic soldier at the end of book 8 envisions a 'Romanized' Carthage celebrating a triumph, the line ends with a clausula that Curio uses when encouraging Julius Caesar to carry on with his civil war: *in Libyam Ausonii portatur pompa triumphi* ("the Roman triumphal procession is brought to Libya," *Pun.* 8.673); *nunc neque te longi remeantem pompa triumphi/ excipit* ("nor does a long triumphal procession welcome you now on your return," Luc. 1.286–87; cf. Luc. 8.733).²⁸

In book 9 there is also the story of Satricus and Solymus, in which on the eve of the battle Solymus mistakes his father Satricus for a Carthaginian, slays him, and, once he realizes what he has done, kills himself (*Pun.* 9.66–177). This tale evokes civil war not only because of the confusion between friend and foe or, rather, father and foe, but because the details of familial killing and suicide are common analogues of civil strife and the story as a whole is modeled after double-death tales associated with Rome's own history of civil war.²⁹ Also, the ominous warning that the dying Solymus scrawls in blood on his father's shield, *fuge proelia Varro* ("avoid battle, Varro," *Pun.* 9.175),

²⁷ Varro's election to the consulship (*Pun.* 8.242–77) exposes tensions between the senate and the people and is itself a hint at civil strife, which is developed as such in a simile that compares Varro to an out-of-control charioteer (*Pun.* 8.278–83). For discussion and details, see Danesi-Marioni (1986) 49–55; McGuire (1997) 126–27, 131–32; Dominik (2003) 492–93 and (2006) 120–21; and Ariemma in this volume (241–76).

²⁸ *Pun.* 8.300–1, 332–33, and 673 are all discussed by McGuire (1997) 133–34.

²⁹ For details, see Niemann (1975) 174–77; Mezzanotte (1995) 362–63; McGuire (1997) 134–35; Fucecchi (1999) 315–22, 332–36; and Dominik (2006) 124–25.

echoes Pompey's plea to his troops to flee the battlefield of Pharsalus: *fuge proelia dira* ("avoid deadly battle," Luc. 7.689). Moreover, in the Cannae books Silius includes several Romans who never participated in the Second Punic War, but whose names evoke those of descendants who participated in Rome's civil wars, and in the case of those who are known to have participated in the war, many of them are given qualities and characteristics that identify them with future, civil war namesakes. Several of these individuals even allude to participants in the civil war between Caesar and Pompey and, often, as they are specifically portrayed by Lucan in his epic.³⁰

Another noteworthy aspect of Silius' allusive program in the Cannae books is that he identifies several Romans with Pompey, especially, the consul Paulus.³¹ Before the battle, for example, when Paulus tells Fabius that he will fight alongside Varro if he has to, he echoes Pompey's refusal to return to Italy after his victory at Dyrrachium: *similem uidebit/Varroni Paulum redeuntem saucia Roma* ("or wounded Rome will see Paulus returning like Varro," *Pun.* 8.347–48); *numquam uidebit/me nisi dimisso redeuntem milite Roma* ("and Rome will never see me returning except with my soldiers disbanded," Luc. 6.320–21). The telling moment, however, comes in book 10, when on the occasion of Paulus' death Silius compares the Roman army to a decapitated body:

hic finis Paulo. iacet altum pectus et ingens
 dextera, quem, soli si bella agitanda darentur,
 aequares forsan Fabio. mors addidit urbi
 pulchra decus misitque uiri inter sidera nomen.
 Postquam spes Italum mentesque in consule lapsae,
 ceu truncus capitis saeuus exercitus armis
 sternitur, et uictrix toto furit Africa campo. (*Pun.* 10.305–11)

This is the end of Paulus. His broad chest and great hand have fallen. You would perhaps regard him as Fabius' equal, if the war were his alone to wage. His noble death added glory to the city and set the man's name among the stars. After the hopes and minds of the Italians fell with the consul, the army, as if its head cut off, is slain by brutal arms, and Africa rages victorious over the entire plain.

³⁰ McGuire (1995); Mezzanotte (1995) 383–85; and McGuire (1997) 61–63, 85, 136–44.

³¹ Other Romans identified by allusion with Pompey are Varro (*Pun.* 9.17–18 = Luc. 8.658; *Pun.* 9.655 = Luc. 7.29) and Curio (*Pun.* 10.214 = Luc. 1.685–86). Marcellus is later connected to Pompey by allusion (*Pun.* 15.372–73 = Luc. 1.135). For Fabius and Pompey, see n. 58, below.

It is not simply the decapitation image here (*ceu truncus capitis*, 10.310), but verbal parallels that establish a link with Lucan's Pompey; *iacet* (10.305) and *truncus* (10.310) are found in the *matrona*'s prophecy of Pompey's death in Luc. 1.685–86. It has also been observed that this passage is modeled after Virgil's description of the death of Priam in *Aeneid* 2.554–58, and as that passage, according to Servius (*ad Aen.* 2.557), was understood to refer to the death of Pompey, an interpretation with which Silius was in all likelihood familiar, Pompey may be evoked in this way in connection with Paulus' death as well.³² There are still other details in the passage and its wider context that invite us to think of Pompey:³³ Paulus' immortal *nomen* (*Pun.* 10.308) reminds us of Pompey's apotheosis in Luc. 9.1–14 and of plays on his name, *nomen*, throughout Lucan's epic;³⁴ Lentulus, who advises Paulus to flee the battlefield (*Pun.* 10.267–75), recalls the Lentulus who advises Pompey to seek Egypt's help after the Pharsalus defeat (Luc. 8.328–455); an Egyptian boat simile (*Pun.* 10.321–25) hints at Pompey's death in Egypt;³⁵ and Paulus' appearance, when his body is discovered, resembles that of Pompey arriving at Lesbos after his defeat at Pharsalus: *puluere canities atro arentique cruore/squalebat barba* ("his grey hair was matted with black dust, and his beard with dried blood," *Pun.* 10.510–11); *canitiem atque atro squalentis puluere uestis* ("his grey hair, and his clothes matted with black dusk," Luc. 8.57). As is clear, Silius wants us to read the defeat at Cannae and, especially, the death of Paulus there in relation to the death of Pompey and, in doing so, invites us to see Paulus as a kind of Pompey figure or, perhaps, Rome as the Pompey figure and Paulus as the equivalent of Pompey's head.³⁶ In either case, the Cannae battle marks the end of the defeated, self-destructive phase of the war for Rome, and allusions to Pompey's death at this point aptly underline that message. After all, Rome's fortunes will steadily improve from here on out and will result in her final victory in the war.³⁷

³² Marpicati (1999) 191, 195–96, 199 and Marks (2008) 72.

³³ Several of these details are discussed by Marpicati (1999) 197, 200–1.

³⁴ So, e.g., *stat magni nominis umbra* ("he stands, the shadow of a great name," Luc. 1.135). This line, incidentally, is echoed in Pacuvius' speech to his son Perolla at Capua with reference to Paulus: *ante oculos.../...Pauli stare ingentem miraberis umbram* ("you will be amazed at the huge shade of Paulus standing before your eyes," *Pun.* 11.345–46). For more on Paulus' *nomen* and its Pompeian associations, see Marks (2008) 73–75.

³⁵ Also, *Pun.* 10.321–22 = Luc. 8.118–19.

³⁶ For these interpretive possibilities, see Marks (2008) 70–75.

³⁷ That the battle of Cannae marks a central, turning-point in the epic is widely recognized; see, among others, Niemann (1975) 30–36; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy

3. *Nec longe cladis metae*

Rome's recovery begins soon after Cannae, and allusions to Lucan mark that positive development by distancing Rome from Pompey. When Scipio forces a group of deserters, led by Metellus, to stay true to the Roman cause at Canusium, he calls the gods to witness his threat, using the same phrase, *testare deos* ("call the gods to witness," *Pun.* 10.440), that Pompey uses to encourage his men to give up the fight at Pharsalus (Luc. 7.690). Later in the book, members of the Roman senate, *pia turba senatus* ("the pious crowd of the senate," *Pun.* 10.592), step up to fill magistracies that have been vacated by deaths in the battle; Pompey, speaking to his wife Cornelia on Lesbos, uses the same clause, *pia turba senatus*, but does so while embracing and even glorifying his defeated condition (Luc. 8.79). After recounting the many measures Rome undertook in response to the Cannae defeat, Silius praises the city's moral character and says: *haec tum Roma fuit* ("this was Rome at that time," *Pun.* 10.657). These words echo those spoken by Pompey when he tells Cornelia that he has all along considered her place of refuge, Lesbos, his true home and homeland: *hic mihi Roma fuit* ("for me Rome has been here," Luc. 8.133).³⁸ In each of these post-Cannae moments, Silius draws a contrast rather than a comparison between Rome and Pompey: the Romans refuse to accept defeat and give up whereas Pompey accepts his defeat and gives up on Rome. Yet the clearest sign that Rome has shed her Pompeian identity comes in book 12, when the city, inspired by recent successes, begins to work as a cohesive whole: *corpore sic toto ac membris Roma omnibus usa/exsangues rursus tollebat ad aethera uultus* ("Thus, Rome, using her entire body and all her limbs, was raising her pale face to the sky," *Pun.* 12.318–19). Just two books earlier at Cannae, Rome was compared to Pompey's mangled, headless trunk. That transformation is now undone: her body is reassembled, her head reattached and held high.³⁹

(1986) 2505, 2507–10; Küppers (1986) 182–92; Delarue (1992) 155–60; Braun (1993) 181–83; and McGuire (1997) 111–12.

³⁸ We are also probably meant to recall Lentulus' speech to the exiled senate, in which he reminds them that the senate continued to rule in exile even in a time of extreme crisis, such as when the Gauls sacked Rome (*illic Roma fuit*, "there was Rome," Luc. 5.29), a message that would seem to coincide, rather than conflict, with the point Silius is making here. For discussion of *Pun.* 10.657 with reference to both of these moments in Lucan's epic, see Tipping (2007) 227–29.

³⁹ Marks (2008) 75–76.

Rome's recovery also entails the abandonment of her former, self-destructive ways: after protecting her Italian interests and defending herself in book 12, she directs her energies outward, taking the war to the enemy at Capua in book 13, at Syracuse in book 14, in Spain in books 15 and 16, and finally in Africa in book 17. The key figure in this new, revitalized Rome and its most conspicuous representative is Scipio, whose personal story, in fact, mirrors the evolution of his city over the course of the war. The first time we lay eyes on him, at the battle at the Ticinus, he is unable to cope with the prospect of his father's death and attempts to commit suicide (*Pun.* 4.454–58). Scipio's self-destructive impulse parallels that of Rome herself at this point in the epic and is even figured in terms of civil war, as an allusion to Lucan's proem shows: *conuersa in semet dextra* ("his hand turned against himself," *Pun.* 4.458); *in sua uictrici conuersum uiscera dextra* ("turned against its own guts with a victorious hand," *Luc.* 1.3). The god Mars, however, succeeds in redirecting his emotions against the enemy (*Pun.* 4.458–59), helps him rescue his father (*Pun.* 4.459–71), and praises the young Scipio for his deed (*Pun.* 4.472–77), telling him that "still greater things await" (*adhuc maiora supersunt*, *Pun.* 4.476). Of course, there never could have been glory in Scipio's suicide; his destiny is to win final victory for Rome in the war, the event to which Mars' words look ahead. It is only fitting then that by allusion Silius draws a contrast with Lucan's Vulteius, who encourages his men to kill themselves because "greater things do not await" (*non maiora supersunt*, *Luc.* 4.501). Scipio is not going to repeat his initial mistake of self-annihilation or revisit the self-destructive behavior of a Vulteius; he is not going to be involved in civil war. The next time we see him on the battlefield, he seems already to have learned this lesson: when the consul Varro is in danger at Cannae, Scipio does not turn against himself, but, rather, takes on the enemy by turning the conflict toward himself (*in sese discrimina uertit*, *Pun.* 9.429).⁴⁰

The young Scipio still has many lessons to learn before he becomes the great general he is destined to be, and one of those lessons is to avoid civil war. Hence, among the shades he sees in the *nekylia* of book 13 there are cautionary examples from Rome's civil war future, Marius,

⁴⁰ Cf. *Pun.* 7.8, 8.386–87, 16.651. Of course, another sign of Scipio's evolving understanding of his responsibility to Rome is that he prevents the desertion of Metellus and others at Canusium, as we saw above. For more on Scipio's growth or "education" in the epic, see Marks (2005a) 113–61.

Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar (*Pun.* 13.853–67), and the description of Pompey’s shade there, it should be noted, is closely modeled after Lucan’s description of Pompey’s beheading: *ille, hirta cui subrigitur coma fronte, decorum/et gratum terris Magnus caput* (“that one, whose hair rises up from his shaggy brow, is Magnus, a head beautiful and pleasing to the world,” *Pun.* 13.861–62); *impius ut Magnum nosset puer, illa uerenda/regibus hirta coma et generosa fronte decora/caesaries comprehensa manu est* (“so that the impious boy might recognize Magnus, that shaggy hair of his, revered by kings, and the beautiful locks upon his noble brow were taken in hand,” *Luc.* 8.679–81).⁴¹ In the crossroads episode of book 15, when the goddess Voluptas tries to convince Scipio to live a life of otiose comfort away from war (*Pun.* 15.32–67), she begins her speech with an echo of Lucan’s proem (*quis furor hic, non digne puer*, “what madness is this, unworthy boy?” *Pun.* 15.33; *quis furor, o ciues*, “what madness, o citizens,” *Luc.* 1.8; cf. *Luc.* 1.681, 7.95),⁴² and a few lines later uses a clausula that Pothinus uses when persuading Ptolemy to have Pompey murdered: *fata lacesses* (“you provoke fate,” *Pun.* 15.36); *fata lacessis* (*Luc.* 8.533). Of course, we are not meant to side with Voluptas’ position, and these allusions subtly reinforce that point. Living an idle, inactive life not only conflicts with one’s sacred duty to one’s country, an argument that the goddess Virtus in her responding speech makes (*Pun.* 15.68–120), but it is also a recipe for disaster. As Jupiter explains in his speech to Venus in book 3, it was because Rome had become sedentary and unambitious that she was in decline at the outset of the war; the god, therefore, designed the war to revitalize her and to set her on her destined path of world rule (*Pun.* 3.573–83). What Jupiter warns against is precisely what Voluptas recommends, and she knows well what her advice, if followed, would entail; for when Scipio chooses the path of Virtus, Voluptas flies away in rage, promising that Rome will some day succumb to her, a hint, it seems, at Rome’s future civil wars (*Pun.* 15.121–28).⁴³ It is also significant that Virtus, when advising Scipio to take intrepid action on Rome’s behalf, encourages him to be a “cultivator of justice” (*iustitiae cultor*, *Pun.* 15.111); Lucan uses this same phrase of Cato (*Luc.* 2.389), and, notably, right before he tells

⁴¹ On the civil war shades, see Reitz (1982) 127–29.

⁴² Cf. *Aen.* 5.670.

⁴³ On this interpretation, see Marks (2005a) 256.

us that Cato was incorruptible by *uoluptas* (Luc. 2.390–91).⁴⁴ Scipio, as we can see, undergoes the same transformation his city does: from self-destruction to selflessness, from replicating the gestures and acts of civil war to fighting against her true enemy, Hannibal and Carthage.

4. Carthage's 'Civil War': Punica 11–17

While Rome's fortunes improve after Cannae, Carthage's decline, and, again, allusions to Lucan's *De bello civili* underline this new direction in the war: whereas in books 1–10 the Romans and their ally Saguntum were the ones identified with the defeated and suffering in civil war, now in books 11–17 it is the Carthaginians and their ally Capua who are so identified. Many of the allusions, furthermore, allow us to trace the trajectory of this phase of the war, framing its beginning and end, just as they did previously; that is, at early or seminal moments in it we are taken back to 'beginnings' or 'firsts' in Lucan's epic, and toward its end to the defeat and death of Pompey. The civil war between Caesar and Pompey is, therefore, played out on allusive level for a second time in the epic, now in connection with Carthage's defeats.

Two related events facilitate Carthage's decline: Capua's defection from the Roman cause and Hannibal's winter stay there. With these events, recounted in book 11, Silius uses allusion to take us back to the beginning of Lucan's epic. Of particular note is his description of the Capuans' decadent lifestyle (*Pun.* 11.38–43), which is modeled after Lucan's description of the moral decline that led Rome into civil strife (Luc. 1.160–65). Silius again alludes to these lines from *De bello civili* 1 when the Romans take the city two books later (*Pun.* 13.351–56) and thus frames Capua's 'civil war' story in the epic.⁴⁵ A related phenomenon is that Capua's story recalls Saguntum's, with which the first phase of the war and, indeed, the *Punica* itself began. Such reminders of 'beginnings' in Capua's story, whether through allusions to Lucan

⁴⁴ Virtus alludes to Cato elsewhere in her speech too: *asper principio (neque enim mihi fallere mos est)*, "[the road to my house] is hard at first—nor is it my task to deceive," (*Pun.* 15.103); when Cato asks for volunteers to join him in crossing the desert, he says: *si quibus ire sat est. neque enim mihi fallere quemquam/est animus* ("if it is enough for some to go; for I do not want to deceive anyone," Luc. 9.388–89).

⁴⁵ Other allusions to *De bello civili* 1 in connection with Capua's story and elsewhere in the book: *Pun.* 11.100 = Luc. 1.361–62; *Pun.* 11.308–9 = Luc. 1.247; *Pun.* 11.501 = Luc. 1.584; *Pun.* 11.512 = Luc. 1.595; *Pun.* 11.552 = Luc. 1.38–39.

or to Saguntum's story in the *Punica*, emphasize that at Capua and with Capua the second phase of the war, the defeated, 'civil war' phase for Carthage, is beginning.⁴⁶

After Hannibal's winter stay at Capua in book 11, spring arrives, and the campaigning season begins. Here we witness a 'restart' of the war, now in its post-Cannae phase, and this new beginning is signaled as such through several allusions to the beginning of the civil war in Lucan's epic: *at Libyci ducis ut fulserunt signa per agros* ("but when the standards of the Libyan leader flashed throughout the fields," *Pun.* 12.11); *ut notae fulserunt aquilae Romanae signa* ("when the well-known eagles and Roman standards flashed," *Luc.* 1.244); *insonuere tubae passim clamorque uirorum* ("trumpets blared here and there and the shouting of men," *Pun.* 12.181); *insonuere tubae et, quanto clamore cohortes* ("trumpets blared, and with as great a shout the cohorts," *Luc.* 1.578); *hac iter ad muros Capuae* ("by this route is the way to the walls of Capua," *Pun.* 12.194); *hac iter est bellis* ("by this route is the way to war," *Luc.* 1.257); *quo praeda uel ira uocasset* ("to where booty or anger called him," *Pun.* 12.430); *quo spes quoque ira uocasset* ("to where hope and to where anger called him," *Luc.* 1.146).⁴⁷ Even later in this phase, when a new campaign is undertaken or a new theater in the war opens up, we are reminded of "firsts" in Lucan's epic: the sea battle at Syracuse in *Punica* 14, for example, is extensively modeled after the sea battle at Massilia in *De bello civili* 3, the first battle recounted at length in Lucan's epic, and the beginning of Scipio's Spanish campaign occasions an Isthmus simile (*Pun.* 15.154–57) that is based on a simile Lucan uses to demonstrate how Crassus' death precipitated the outbreak of hostilities between Caesar and Pompey (*Luc.* 1.100–4).⁴⁸

⁴⁶ However, a major difference between Saguntum and Capua, or even between Saguntum and Rome in civil war, is that the former exhibits *fides* whereas the latter does not; see esp. *Pun.* 13.281–91. For more on Saguntum and Capua, see Bernstein (2008) 179–90.

⁴⁷ Note that *Pun.* 12.194 looks ahead to the siege of Capua but alludes to a line in Lucan's Ariminum episode, which was alluded to at Saguntum (*Pun.* 1.389). The similarity between Capua and Saguntum, as 'firsts' in each phase of the epic, is thus reinforced again.

⁴⁸ The battle at Syracuse recalls Massilia because it is a sea battle and not simply because it is a new front in the war. For allusions to Massilia there, see Wezel (1873) 92–95, Brouwers (1982) 76–78, and Burck (1984a) 31–44. The Isthmus simile is also fitting because Scipio is returning to Spain, which is where the war began, at Saguntum, and where Murrus was compared to Crassus by allusion (*Pun.* 1.479 = *Luc.* 1.100), as we saw above. In fact, the simile in book 15 even shares parallels with a

Silius' emphasis on 'beginnings' or 'firsts' in the *De bello ciuili* makes us sensitive to the self-destructive aspects of Carthage's decline. In Capua's story alone there are several signs of internal disunity and discord: her defection from the Roman cause, Decius' opposition to the defection, and the suicides of the plot's ringleaders. Moreover, the alliance with Capua actually harms rather than helps Hannibal: his decadent winter stay in the city in book 11 does irrevocable damage to his cause; he fails to win another major victory thereafter in the war. Elsewhere in the epic there is Hanno, the voice of opposition to Hannibal in the Carthaginian senate, who warns his countrymen that their support of the war will be their undoing; in the end, he is proved correct on this point (*Pun.* 2.270–326, 11.554–600; cf. 4.770–71, 8.21–24). By the beginning of book 16 it becomes clear that Carthaginian support of Hannibal is slipping too: stuck in Bruttium, he is denied the resources and reinforcements necessary to continue his campaign (*Pun.* 16.11–14; cf. 17.194–200). Moreover, in one of his last moments in the epic Hannibal even considers suicide (*Pun.* 17.565–66), a self-destructive gesture evocative of civil war, as we have seen. As for Carthage's other generals, they exhibit a remarkable lack of unity and preparedness: faced with Scipio's invasion, the Carthaginian armies in Spain fail to band together to oppose him and are defeated one by one (cf. *Pun.* 15.183–91); New Carthage is taken by surprise in one day (*Pun.* 15.230–50); Hasdrubal, caught unawares, is routed at Baecula and then makes a foolhardy attempt to invade Italy, only to walk into a trap at the Metaurus, where he is defeated by the consuls Nero and Livius (*Pun.* 15.439–808). In the final analysis, it is not simply the recovery of Rome after the Cannae defeat that contributes to Carthage's decline in the epic; the Carthaginians themselves must share the blame for their own misfortunes. In Silius' moralizing view everything can be traced back to Hannibal's original act of inciting the war, to say nothing of more distant motivating factors, such as the First Punic War and Dido's curse.⁴⁹

simile in *Pun.* 1.468–72, when Hannibal pursues Murrus; on this, see Brouwers (1982) 74–76.

⁴⁹ A good example of how Silius ties these various causes together is his ekphrasis of Hannibal's shield (*Pun.* 2.406–20); on this, see Vessey (1975), Kißel (1979) 185–92, Küppers (1986) 154–64, Venini (1991), and Devallet (1992). Also, see Küppers (1986) 61–92, Marks (2003), Bernstein (2008) 135–39, and Ganiban (84–91) and Harrison (282–85) in this volume.

Another trend in this second phase of the epic, and especially toward its end, is the allusive emergence of Pompey, which happened toward the end of the first phase at Cannae as well. But whereas Pompey was previously identified with the Romans, he is now identified with the Carthaginians. Notable among them is Hasdrubal: his confused night march, which leads him into the Romans' waiting hands at the Metaurus, contains an allusion to Pompey's flight from Pharsalus (*implicat actas/caeco errore uias*: "[Tellus] entwines their paths, pursued with blind wandering," *Pun.* 15.618–19; *implicitasque errore uias*: "and his paths entwined by wandering," *Luc.* 8.5), and when his head is displayed to Hannibal after the Metaurus battle, there is an allusion to Sextus' description of his father's head on display: *tum Nero procera sublimia cuspide portans/ora ducis caesi* ("then Nero, carrying the head of the slain leader raised aloft on a long spear," *Pun.* 15.813–14); *quantum gestata per urbem/ora ducis, quae transfixo sublimia pilo/uidimus* ("as much as the head of the leader, carried through the city, which we saw raised aloft, fixed on a spear," *Luc.* 9.137–39).⁵⁰ I call attention to these two allusions because they have implications for our reading of Hannibal; for Hasdrubal in *Punica* 15 is portrayed as a kind of "double" of his brother Hannibal, and his identification with Pompey, therefore, hints at Hannibal's own transformation into a Pompey figure and thus underlines this "doubling" by way of foreshadowing.⁵¹

It did not start out that way for Hannibal, however; in the first half of the epic he is most often identified with Lucan's Caesar.⁵² Yet as his fortunes decline and final defeat approaches, his likeness to Pompey becomes increasingly evident.⁵³ For example, at the beginning of

⁵⁰ Others identified with Pompey include Carthage's ally Capua (*Pun.* 11.123–24 = *Luc.* 8.869–70) and Mago (*Pun.* 11.488 = *Luc.* 2.688–89).

⁵¹ For Hasdrubal as Hannibal's "double," see Augoustakis (2003b) 111–12, 116, 119–20.

⁵² So, e.g., *Pun.* 1.58 = *Luc.* 1.144–45; *Pun.* 1.249 = *Luc.* 1.245; *Pun.* 2.250 = *Luc.* 2.658; *Pun.* 2.357 = *Luc.* 5.574; *Pun.* 3.30 = *Luc.* 3.412; *Pun.* 3.31 = *Luc.* 3.430; *Pun.* 3.45 = *Luc.* 9.987; *Pun.* 3.172 = *Luc.* 5.409; *Pun.* 4.756 = *Luc.* 2.442; *Pun.* 6.698 = *Luc.* 5.296; *Pun.* 7.116 = *Luc.* 1.228; *Pun.* 7.401 = *Luc.* 1.206; *Pun.* 11.243–46 = *Luc.* 1.205–12; *Pun.* 12.11 = *Luc.* 1.244; *Pun.* 12.430 = *Luc.* 1.146. For more on Hannibal as Caesar, see von Albrecht (1964) 54–55, 165; Kißel (1979) 108–11; Brouwers (1982) 82–83; and Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2511–13, 2515–16.

⁵³ Hannibal's likeness to Pompey is, nevertheless, anticipated earlier in the epic. The most conspicuous instance is when Hannibal sends his wife Imilce back to Carthage (*Pun.* 3.61–157), an episode that has much in common with Cornelia's departure from Pompey (*Luc.* 5.722–815); on this, see Bruère (1952) 220–22 and Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2513–14. Also, *Pun.* 5.676 = *Luc.* 8.211; *Pun.* 7.112–13 = *Luc.*

book 16, where his campaign languishes in Bruttium, Silius compares Hannibal to a bull that has lost his commanding position in the herd and is preparing to regain it (*Pun.* 16.4–10); this simile is modeled after a bull simile applied to Pompey (Luc. 2.601–7).⁵⁴ Silius then tells us that even though Hannibal's campaign was in disarray, fear of him "was keeping his head safe as if inviolable to weapons and sacred" (*uelut inuiolabile telis/seruabant sacrumque caput*, *Pun.* 16.16–17). The detail of the head, especially given its proximity to the bull simile, is surely meant to evoke Pompey and does so ominously, suggesting that a decapitation of sorts awaits Hannibal. In fact, the phrase *sacrumque caput* echoes Lucan's apostrophe to the Roman Septimius when he cuts off Pompey's head in *De bello ciuili* 8: *Pompei diro sacrum caput ense recidis* ("you cut off the sacred head of Pompey with a cruel sword," Luc. 8.677). Silius then says that "the name of Hannibal alone was enough" (*unum/Hannibalis sat nomen erat*, *Pun.* 16.18–19) to compensate for his weapons, resources, and manpower. This is another Pompeian detail, and it too has ominous overtones. Lucan frequently plays on Pompey's *nomen* to call attention to the ironic disparity between the greatness of his past accomplishments, conveyed by his name, *Magnus*, and his weakened state and condition in the civil war with Caesar. The same is true of Hannibal at this point in the *Punica*: his days of glory and victory are behind him.⁵⁵ It is, furthermore, likely that Silius had in mind at this point a moment in *De bello ciuili* 7, where Lucan says something similar about Pompey when he arrives at Larisa after the Pharsalus defeat: *scilicet immenso superest ex nomine multum, / teque minor solo cunctas impellere gentes / rursus in arma potes rursusque in fata redire* ("certainly, much remains of your huge name, and you, though inferior only to yourself, can compel all peoples again to war and can again face your destiny," Luc. 7.717–19). Pompey, like Hannibal, is reduced to being a name, though a name that still has power and influence.

Silius picks up where he left off the next time we encounter Hannibal in book 17. Scipio has since invaded Africa and defeated Syphax,

2.555–56; *Pun.* 12.684 = Luc. 7.719. In the catalogue of his forces, Hannibal is connected with sites famous for Pompeian defeats as well: Thapsus (3.261), Ilerda (3.359), Munda (3.400). On Hannibal as Pompey, see Brouwers (1982) 82–84, Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2516–17, Fucecchi (1990b) 157–66, and Marks (2008) 81–83.

⁵⁴ For the simile, see Fucecchi (1990b) 154–59.

⁵⁵ For more on the significance of Hannibal's head and name here, see Marks (2008) 80–81. For plays on Pompey's name in Lucan, see Feeney (1986a) and Bartsch (1997) 83–93.

and Carthage is on the verge of collapse, having only Hannibal to rely on: *stabat Carthago truncatis undique membris/uni innixa uiro, tantoque fragore ruentem/Hannibal absenti retinebat nomine molem* ("Carthage was standing, relying on one man, her limbs everywhere cut off, and Hannibal, though absent, by his name was keeping the mass from collapsing with a great crash," *Pun.* 17.149–51). Carthage, as we can see, is reaching the point that Rome reached at Cannae—she is being mutilated (cf. *Pun.* 10.309–11)—and, just as before, Silius' program of allusion to Pompey has a part to play in developing this motif. Indeed, the many reminders of Pompey, his head, and his decapitation have all along pointed the way toward this moment, and so that we do not fail to pick up on that connection Silius refers here to Hannibal's name, his *nomen*, in a way that takes us back to the beginning of book 16. Of course, Hannibal, Carthage's leader or head, will return, but in the end will flee the battlefield of Zama (*Pun.* 17.616–17), and Carthage will be left without him, headless, as it were. Unlike Rome, however, Carthage will not recover from her mutilation: her body will not be reassembled; her head will not be reattached and held high again (cf. *Pun.* 12.318–19). Carthage, in short, is sliding toward a final, Pompeian defeat.

The Carthaginians then send an embassy to Hannibal to implore him to return and save his city (*Pun.* 17.152–57, 170–83). He agrees to go, but does so with great reluctance, disappointment, and sadness (*Pun.* 17.184–200). These emotions are particularly evident in his departure (*Pun.* 17.211–220), an episode that is closely modeled after Pompey's departure from Italy (*Luc.* 2.728–30, 3.1–7).⁵⁶ Hannibal's reluctance shows itself again, shortly thereafter, when he tries to turn back to Italy, but is prevented from doing so by a sea-storm (*Pun.* 17.221–91). I linger on these late moments in Hannibal's story because they testify to a significant change in him in the second half of the epic: whereas he used to be impatient, dynamic, and daring, after Cannae he has slowed down and has become increasingly hesitant and indecisive. He has become, in other words, like Pompey, who throughout Lucan's *De bello civili* is similarly distinguished by slowness, delay, and indecision.⁵⁷ As these qualities are commonly associated with old age, it is also no surprise that Hannibal is identified as an old man, *senex*, several times

⁵⁶ Currie (1958), Brouwers (1982) 83–84, Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2516–17, and Fucecchi (1990b) 159–60.

⁵⁷ For more on Hannibal slowing down after Cannae, see Marks (2005a) 27–31, 55–59. For his decline, more generally, see Fucecchi (1990b).

in the second half of the poem and that Lucan regularly portrays Pompey as old and enfeebled as well.⁵⁸ Allusions identifying Hannibal with Pompey thus reinforce and complement this evolving portrait of the Carthaginian in decline.⁵⁹

Perhaps Silius' most striking allusion to Lucan in the *Punica* is his last. After the decisive victory at Zama, he describes Scipio's triumphal procession in Rome and concludes his epic with the following two lines: *nec uero, cum te memorat de stirpe deorum, / prolem Tarpei, mentitur Roma, Tonantis* ("nor does Rome lie when it speaks of your divine stock, of you the offspring of the Tarpeian Thunderer," *Pun.* 17.653–54). These lines echo the end of *De bello ciuili* 8, where Lucan reflects on the death Pompey: *atque erit Aegyptus populis fortasse nepotum / tam mendax Magni tumulo quam Creta Tonantis* ("and future peoples will perhaps consider the Egyptians as false about the tomb of Magnus as the Cretans about the Thunderer's," *Luc.* 8.871–72).⁶⁰ The allusion invites us to contrast Scipio's and Rome's fate with Pompey's and Carthage's. Whereas people will one day doubt the truth of Pompey's place of death, the Romans will not doubt one day the truth of Scipio's divine paternity, and whereas the Cretans claim that Jupiter died, Rome's final victory proves that the god is alive and well and that his reign and his city will continue to thrive. Moreover, the allusion reminds us, one final time, of Hannibal and his likeness to Pompey and in this respect reinforces the defeated and vanquished outcome of the war for Carthage and her leader.⁶¹ Coming at the very end of the *Punica*, it also marks the end of this second phase of the war, defeat of Carthage. Silius, we recall, did something similar when he alluded to the

⁵⁸ For Hannibal as old, see *Pun.* 8.329–31, 16.687–88, and 17.331–35 with Marks (2005a) 59–60. By slowing down and aging, Hannibal begins to resemble Fabius too, although these qualities are differently marked in each case: old age and slowness tend to be signs of Fabius' maturity in the epic whereas in Hannibal they imply weakness; so, Marks (2005a) 60. Even so, note that both Hannibal and Fabius are linked by allusion to Pompey and his *sacrum caput* (*Luc.* 8.677); *Pun.* 7.19 (Fabius), 16.17 (Hannibal).

⁵⁹ Also, note that Hannibal's last speech in the epic, in which he reflects on how he will be remembered (*Pun.* 17.606–15), is reminiscent of Pompey's final thoughts before his death (*Luc.* 8.613–36); see Narducci (2002) 363 n. 70. On the references to Hannibal's head and name in the speech (*Pun.* 17.607–10; cf. 17.392–94), which seem to support this connection, see Marks (2008) 82–83.

⁶⁰ The allusion is noted by Hardie (1997a) 159.

⁶¹ So, Marks (2008) 84–85. But also see Hardie (1997a) 159–62 and Tipping (2007) 239–41, who stress how the allusion reopens the epic in its final moments to considerations about Rome's future civil wars and the dangers powerful individuals pose to the state.

decapitated Pompey in connection with Paulus' death, which marked the end of the first phase of the epic, the defeated phase of the war for Rome. In fact, shortly before the triumph episode Silius takes us back to that moment in a way that reminds us of Pompey. Immediately after Hannibal flees the battlefield of Zama, Silius says: *hic finis bello* ("this is the end of the war," *Pun.* 17.618). These words echo those Silius used on the occasion of Paulus' death and Pompey-like defeat at Cannae: *hic finis Paulo* ("this is the end of Paulus," *Pun.* 10.305). And, as was noted earlier, that passage is modeled after Virgil's description of the death of Priam in *Aeneid* 2, a description which itself alludes to the death of Pompey and begins with the words: *haec finis Priami* ("this is the end of Priam," *Aen.* 2.554).⁶² Allusions to Pompey, as we can see, mark the ends of the two major phases of the war.

The allusion also signals the end of the war as a whole and, in doing so, touches on a major motif in the *Punica*, that of the head or *caput*. As Silius indicates in his proem, the war is a conflict over a head or, rather, over which city would be the "head" of the world: *quaesitumque diu, qua tandem poneret arce/terrarum Fortuna caput* ("and it was for a long time in doubt on which citadel Fortune would finally place the head of the world," *Pun.* 1.7–8). Silius uses this image to represent, as it often does, supremacy or hegemony; one need only think of similar phrases such as *caput imperii* or *caput rerum*, which are common enough in Latin literature. The head becomes more than that in the *Punica*, however: it is a recurrent motif that ties the war in with the legendary pasts of both cities and helps measure their shifting fortunes in the conflict. Hence, we are reminded of the horse's head that was discovered during the foundation of Carthage and of the human head that was discovered during the building of the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, each of which portended a glorious future for its city. That the war is a conflict between and over heads has, then, a historical basis and a teleological dimension. This idea is played out over the course of the epic, as each side attempts to cut off in various ways the head of its opponent and thereby to fulfill its destiny of being the head of the world.⁶³ Allusions to Lucan's *De bello civili* and, especially, to Pompey's death and decapitation work in tandem with this motival program, as we have seen: as the Carthaginians gain the advantage

⁶² For this sequence of allusions, see Marks (2008) 83–84.

⁶³ For discussion of these points, see Marks (2008) 68–69.

in the war at Cannae, the Romans are identified with the decapitated Pompey, and as the Romans gain the advantage, the Carthaginians are identified with him. What is more, since the Romans are the final victors, it is only fitting that the final image we are left with is Scipio's procession to the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, which is on the Capitoline, fittingly, the 'head' of the city where the human head, portending Rome's future greatness, was discovered.⁶⁴ No less fitting, of course, is the final allusion to Pompey, and not only because in referring to the outcome of the civil war between Caesar and Pompey it pointedly underlines the outcome of this conflict of heads—Rome has won the war and has kept her 'head' whereas Carthage has been defeated and has lost hers—but because it takes us back to the question Silius posed at the beginning of the epic, on which citadel Fortune would place the head of the world. In fact, we might have expected at the beginning that we would come full circle like this by the end; for the phrase *Fortuna caput* in Silius' question echoes a grimly ominous remark made by Cornelia to her husband Pompey: *hoc iuris habebat/in tantum Fortuna caput?* ("did Fortune have this authority over so great a head?" Luc. 8.95–96).

5. Conclusion

Silius' allusions to Lucan serve multiple literary purposes, as we have seen, but they also speak to realities beyond the text. It is important to remember that Silius began composing his epic in the early 80s, a little over a decade after Rome had experienced civil war herself in AD 69, and that his audience still had, therefore, vivid and direct memories of that experience. By evoking civil war in the epic, he gives a contemporary resonance to his story, inviting his readers to compare the events of the distant past with the present and to learn from them. It is surely to this end that he so carefully charts Rome's evolution over the course of the war, in particular, and uses allusion to bring the causes of her decline and its failed remedies in line with Lucan's handling of them in his *De bello civili*. Even so, Silius conveys his didactic message by different means and to different ends. Unlike Lucan, who offers few positive models of heroism, Silius offers many: his Romans, even if at odds

⁶⁴ For the etymology and its significance, see Marks (2008) 69.

with each other sometimes and mired in their own kind of civil war, rarely exhibit the faithlessness or treachery of Lucan's characters, who are, of course, involved in an actual civil war, and thus are generally worthy of emulation. Indeed, the *Punica* can teach readers of Silius' day not only how to avoid vices, but how to embrace virtues, just as the Romans in the Second Punic War did, who stuck together through difficult times and were rewarded for doing so with final victory.

The political message of Silius' epic offers a different lesson to Romans of his day as well. Lucan is on the whole suspicious of powerful individuals in society, and his praise of Nero (Luc. 1.33–66) hardly disabuses us of that interpretation. Silius understands that powerful individuals can do great harm too—one need only think of Flaminius, Varro, or the civil war shades in the *nekyia*—but he also understands that powerful individuals, as long as they are good and just, can do great good and may even be necessary, especially in cases of extreme adversity, such as in the Second Punic War, where Rome's senatorial leadership failed to meet the Hannibalic challenge.⁶⁵ No figure in the *Punica* represents this kind of individual better than Scipio, who in the late books of the epic heals divisions between segments of Roman society, brings the city together in the cause of final victory, and in the process becomes a kind of king figure or proto-*princeps*.⁶⁶ Telling, moreover, is that Scipio resembles the contemporary Domitian in several ways and that in Jupiter's prophecy in book 3 he is identified as the crucial link between the past of the Second Punic War and the future of Flavian Rome.⁶⁷ Silius may be inviting his readers, then, to draw another parallel between past and present: just as Rome in the first half of the *Punica* is comparable to Rome in her recent civil wars, so the emergence of Scipio in the second half is comparable to the emergence of the Flavians and, above all, Domitian out of those civil wars. All of this need not imply, however, that Silius favored, in principle, a system of one-man rule such as the Principate over the republican system of senatorial control or that he was an unqualified

⁶⁵ At least according to Silius' version of events; see Marks (2005a) 276–83. The difference between Silius' and Lucan's views on powerful individuals is well illustrated by the difference in their views on Alexander the Great; on this, see Marks (2005a) 32–37, 146–47.

⁶⁶ Marks (2005a) 93–110, 163–206. On Scipio as proto-*princeps*, see Tipping's analysis in this volume (194).

⁶⁷ Marks (2005a) 209–44.

supporter of the Flavian emperors or of Domitian; the text simply does not give good traction to either of these inferences.⁶⁸

What it does suggest, at the very least, is that Silius saw in the establishment of the Flavian regime a necessary step toward securing peace after civil war and in the regime's stability a real chance for that peace to be preserved. This does not mean that he believed that Flavian rule or the institution of the Principate was the best of all imaginable options, but that he saw it as the only viable option under the circumstances and that he felt that all Romans, including the emperor Domitian himself, should try to work together to make the best of it. And one way to do that is to learn from Rome's past, her civil war struggles and recovery from them in the Second Punic War. In the final analysis, Silius is both an optimist and a pragmatist and in these respects, perhaps more than in any other, separates himself from his epic predecessor Lucan, who in his thinking on politics and human nature moves between extremes of despairing pessimism and impassioned idealism.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Some have argued for republican tendencies in Silius' political thought and have pointed to a causal link drawn between Rome's post-Cannae success and her future civil wars. There is indeed a link, but, in my opinion, it does not testify to Silius' guardedness toward powerful individuals generally, the Principate as an institution, or the Flavians in particular; see Marks (2005a) 245–88. But also see Tipping (2007) 231–41 together with his essay in this volume (193–218), where he raises thoughtful observations to the contrary.

⁶⁹ Coming to terms with these two tendencies in Lucan is the broad purpose of Bartsch (1997).

CHAPTER SEVEN

INTERPLAY: SILIUS AND STATIUS IN THE GAMES OF *PUNICA* 16

Helen Lovatt

The Flavian period is particularly rich and exciting for the study of epic because we have three extant poems written within a few years of each other. Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, Statius' *Thebaid*, and Silius Italicus' *Punica* were all products of Vespasianic to Domitianic Rome. Since it takes a long time to write an epic, they may even have overlapped with each other in the composition process. This paper aims to stimulate thoughts about the relationship between Silius and Statius, using the games in *Punica* 16 as a case study. Epic games are self-conscious sites of poetic competition, as I have shown in my study of Statius' games.¹ Statius and Silius set themselves up in competition with Homer, Virgil, Ovid, and Valerius Flaccus among others in writing their versions of this set-piece of the epic genre. The games are a particularly good place to analyze the interplay of contemporary texts in the same genre.

Statius and Silius are generally assumed to have been writing at roughly the same time. Dating poetry is an inexact science: ancient biographical traditions go from unreliable to pure fiction; poets themselves love to create images of their lives and times that put self-presentation above the needs of the future literary historian. Coleman lays out the arguments for the dating of various events in Statius' life.² The main argument for the completion of the *Thebaid* is that the proem mentions only the first two of Domitian's military expeditions and not the Sarmatae, whom Domitian defeated in January of AD 93. For the question of when Statius began composition of his version of the Seven against Thebes, we have his reference to the poem in its epilogue as "much watched-over through twelve years" (*o mihi*

¹ Lovatt (2005).

² Coleman (1988) xv–xx.

bissenos multum uigilata per annos/Thebai, Theb. 12.811–12).³ Though we might want to insert a caveat to the effect that twelve years for twelve books sounds suspiciously neat, we can place the composition of the *Thebaid* with a degree of plausibility during AD 80–92. Silius, however, is not so securely datable.⁴ Pliny's *Epistle* 3.7 tells us that Silius starved himself to death in AD 101 (which gives us a *terminus ante quem*) and that he retired from political life in the late 70s.⁵ The general consensus seems to be that Silius was writing later than Statius, but that the composition of the two poems may well have coincided.⁶ Completion or publication may not have been necessary for Silius and Statius to have been aware of each other's work: the practice of reciting parts of not yet completed poems would have given them opportunities to interact.⁷ And if like Virgil, as Donatus' *Vita* says, Statius and Silius did not necessarily compose the poems in chronological order, we cannot securely argue that Silius' games must be later because they occur later in his epic.⁸ So what can we learn from comparing and contrasting the two texts themselves? Is Statius always in the lead or does Silius sometimes overtake?

The methodological problems behind this task are complex: first, there are no clear rules for determining when a similarity is an allusion

³ In *Silu.* 3.5, the poem which he writes to his wife asking her to move to Naples with him, he also talks of his long labor over the poem (*longi tu sola laboris/conscia, cumque tuis crevit mea Thebais annis*, "you alone were aware of my long labour, when my *Thebaid* grew during your years," 3.5.35–36).

⁴ On the date of Silius, see Wistrand (1956); Venini (1970) xv–xvi; Juhnke (1972) 12–13; Dewar (1991) xxxi–xxxv; Smolenaars (1994) xvii–xviii.

⁵ On Pliny and Silius, see now Henderson (2002) 102–24; see also Augoustakis (5–6) and Dominik (428–31) in this volume.

⁶ Wistrand (1956) argues from Martial that Silius must have written the entire epic between 88 and 93; Juhnke (1972) 12–13 leaves aside the question of the relationship between the two epics, but states that the two river battles should be read in the order Silius–Statius, because the fourth book of the *Punica* was written in AD 84 and the ninth book of the *Thebaid* in 88 (but how does he know these things?). McGuire (1997), who reads the three epics together, works from the starting-point that Silius is bringing up the rear. On chronology he concludes that "Silius was at least reading from his work in the early 90s AD, and that a publication date from the mid-90s to around 100 is probable" (14).

⁷ Although Silius' games are in the penultimate book of his poem, while Statius' games come earlier, there is no guarantee that the poems were written in order.

⁸ *Vit. Verg.* 23–24. Though the evidence of Statius' *Achilleid*, stuck at the first turning-post and unfinished at a book and a half, suggests that Statius did compose in order—at least for the *Achilleid*. There is not much evidence about Silius' method of composition, which is the key here, since his games come later than Statius' in terms of book order.

rather than just a similarity;⁹ second, both texts are working with the same models: Virgil, *Aeneid* 5 and Homer, *Iliad* 23; similarities could come from source texts as much as from each other. Once we have picked out a similarity which seems too specific to be chance, and decided that it does not derive from a joint source, we then need to decide who is alluding to whom: before finally going on to think what this might mean.¹⁰ One ‘rule’ for determining the priority of two texts which seem to allude to each other is that the text in which the words concerned are most effectively integrated into the context is the original, the other is the imitator.¹¹ This might be a start: but is only part of the story. What if the imitator is extremely skilled at integrating his imitations, while the original has some other reason for including something that does not fit perfectly with its context?¹² This rule seems to retain a shade of the ideology of ‘original and best’ with the inevitably corollary that imitation is second-rate. It also works best for straight verbal reminiscences and less well for patterns, themes, and ideas. Other possible criteria are equally problematic: increased excess over time, for instance. Critics have seen excess as a symptom of decline in the first century AD:¹³ in which case we would expect the later text to be more excessive than the earlier text. But suppression, miniaturization, and oblique allusion are techniques just as frequently used as capping, elaboration, and multiplication. The use of the “Alexandrian footnote” to signal allusion might also be helpful—but in the ultra-self-conscious world of Flavian epic, a poet like Statius might well use an Alexandrian footnote to signal the fact that he is not alluding

⁹ See, for instance, Hinds (1998) 17–25; Thomas (1986); Conte (1986) 23–31; West and Woodman (1979) 195–200. In particular, West and Woodman note among their concluding remarks “that the imitator moveth as he listeth and therefore that there is no set grammar of comparison for the critic to apply: he must simply be apt to see what is there” (200). To which I might reply: or she must make it up as she goes along.

¹⁰ Fowler (2000) 130 picks out the possibility of reversing the directionality of influence between texts (reading Virgil through Lucan) as one of the great benefits of the theoretical apparatus of intertextuality. I am here interested in “inter-allusion,” to coin a word: where an allusion can be read both ways.

¹¹ Murgía (2003) 411 on relative priority of the Helen episode in the *Aeneid* and Lucan 10.59–65 locates Axelson (1960) as the originator of this rule. See also Tarrant (1981) for a different formulation and Most (1987) for arguments against this as an effective criterion.

¹² Murgía (2003) 426 suggests this possibility.

¹³ See for instance Williams (1978) 213–32: “the ideal of amplification for its own sake is a general characteristic of literature in the early Empire” (214).

to something.¹⁴ I propose instead a different sort of principle: we should look for readings which offer the most interesting story.¹⁵ This is a suggestion arising from the idea that we are not discovering the truth (I do not really expect to work out which came first, Statius' games or Silius') but exploring the possibilities and constructing our own narratives about possible relationships between two texts, which enrich both texts and future readings.¹⁶

My intention, then, is to look in detail at the games of Silius and trace connections with Statius, try reading them backwards and forwards, and see what sort of relationship the two texts seem to have. I will begin with the gladiatorial games, which have a very clear link to Statius' whole poem and a polemical relationship, move on to the two running events, pause briefly with Silius' javelin and Statius' archery, and reach a finale with the two chariot-races.¹⁷

I want to begin with a brief overview of the two sets of games, their contexts, and structure. In Statius' *Thebaid*, the exiled Polynices is bringing an army commanded by his Argive father-in-law, Adrastus, to attack his brother Eteocles in Thebes. En route, they stop at Nemea, where the king's baby son is killed by the accidental tail-swipe of a giant sacred snake: the Argive army buries him with full honors and founds the Nemean games in his honor. In these epic games, there are seven events; they begin with a chariot-race, followed by running, discus, boxing, wrestling, an abortive sword fight, and finally an honorific archery display. Below a table is included showing structures of games in Homer, Virgil, Statius, and Silius. The position of Statius' games in the text (book 6) before the war itself starts, as the climax of the "Odyssean" half of the poem, is similar to the position of Virgil's games. However, the context of Statius' games is essentially Homeric

¹⁴ Originated by Ross (1975) 78, but given currency by Hinds (1998) 1–16.

¹⁵ I have tried to bring out the inevitable subjectivity of all these literary critical games: this is not for me a barrier or a problem, but rather an aspect of what we do that should be acknowledged and even embraced.

¹⁶ We could discuss instead the two texts as special intertexts: where each text is ultimately constituted from inevitable reminiscences of other texts, whether in the mind of author or reader, but these two are specially close to each other and intertwined. Ultimately what attracts me, however, is the narrative of poetic competition which requires the construction of an implied author and a relationship between poets as much as between texts.

¹⁷ König (2005) 235–53 offers an excellent discussion of the games, though *quadrigas* at 16.297 makes clear this is a chariot-race, not a horse-race.

Homer: <i>Iliad</i> 23	Virgil: <i>Aeneid</i> 5	Statius: <i>Thebaid</i> 6	Silius Italicus: <i>Punica</i> 16
Funeral of Patroclus	Rites for Anchises	Funeral of Opheltes	Rites for the two Scipios
1. Chariot-race (262–652)	1. Ship-race (114–285)	1. Chariot-race (389–549)	1. Chariot-race (312–456)
2. Boxing (652–99)	2. Running (286–361)	2. Running (550–645)	2. Running (457–526)
3. Wrestling (700–39)		3. Discus (646–728)	
4. Running (740–97)	3. Boxing (362–484)	4. Boxing (729–825)	
		5. Wrestling (826–910)	
5. Fight in armor (798–825)		6. Fight in armor (911–923)	3. Gladiatorial fights (527–56)
6. Discus (826–49)		see event 3	
7. Archery (850–83)	4. Archery (485–544)	7. Archery (924–937)	4. Javelin (557–74)
8. Javelin (884–97)	5. <i>Lusus Troiae</i> (545–603)	Beginning of archery: mention of javelin (938–46)	5. Honorific javelin throw (575–91)

(like the funeral of Patroclus in *Iliad* 23) and, although the Flavian poet follows the Virgilian order, the number of events (particularly the inclusion of discus and wrestling) also harks back strongly to the *Iliad*.

Silius' games are Homeric in position, coming as a post-script to Scipio's successful war in Spain, but Virgilian in context. Scipio's father and uncle had both been killed in Spain in 212 BC (mentioned in *Punica* 13.387–88, prompting the hero's *katabasis*); in *Punica* 15, Scipio gains command of the armies in Spain and, when his father comes to him in a dream and tells him to take New Carthage, he sets this up as a war of vengeance for his father and uncle, and promises games in their honor (15.180–213). As in the *Aeneid*, then, the games represent a ritual honoring a dead father some time after his death; as in the *Aeneid*, too, there are four events (chariot-race, running, gladiatorial fight, and javelin) followed by a display (javelin throwing rather than *Lusus Troiae*). It is also noticeable that while Statius sets up a clash between Virgil and Homer by setting Homeric number of

events against Virgilian order, Silius avoids this clash.¹⁸ Both Statius and Silius, then, negotiate between the Homeric and the Virgilian, but they do so in radically different ways. Is this Silius reacting against Statius' choices, or vice versa?

Silius' gladiatorial fight enshrines a polemical miniaturization of Statius' *Thebaid* while setting his Roman and self-consciously historical poetic stance against Statius' Greek and Homeric heritage. Comparison with Livy sets Silius' tactics in relief. In Livy's version of these games, they are primarily gladiatorial, with other events 'tacked' on. We can see Silius here negotiating between the historical tradition and the epic tradition, but taking a very different line from Statius. This event is his nod to history and the politics of contemporary spectacle.¹⁹ While Statius shies away from outright gladiatorial spectacle (he does have a sword fight, but it is aborted before it actually starts), Silius is self-consciously Romanizing. What Silius does with the gladiatorial fights, however, brings us back to Statius. Many pairs fight, but Silius (following Livy) picks out one in particular: two rival claimants to a kingdom in Spain. In Livy, they are cousins (*patruales fratres*, 28.21.6), in Silius, twin brothers (*gemini... fratres*, 16.533–35).²⁰ In Livy the older one wins, but in Silius they succeed in killing each other, and when they are put on the same funeral pyre, the flame divides:

nec manes pacem passi. nam corpora iunctus
una cum raperet flamma rogos, impius ignis
dissiluit, cineresque simul iacuisse negarunt. (*Pun.* 16.546–48)

Nor do their shades allow peace. For when a joint pyre snatched their bodies together with flame, the wicked fire jumped apart, and at the same time their ashes refused to lie still.²¹

This is the clearest reference to Statius in Silius' games.²² For the central theme of the *Thebaid* is the mutual fratricide of Polynices and

¹⁸ And if we read his gladiatorial fights as a version of Virgil's boxing, then he actively follows the Virgilian order.

¹⁹ König (2005) 248 suggests persuasively that "this condensation and spectacularization of the scene of fratricide is meant as a comment on the routinization of violence within the Roman heritage," taking a similar line to Leigh (1997) on Lucan and Zissos (2003) on Valerius Flaccus.

²⁰ Valerius Maximus has two brothers, like Silius (9.11.ext.1). König (2005) 248 n. 133.

²¹ Translations are my own.

²² Spaltenstein (1990) 416–38, in his commentary on the fight, frequently mentions correspondences with Statius but is careful to avoid suggesting who was imitating whom. As he points out, the myth of Polynices and Eteocles was well known, but it

Eteocles, and when Antigone and Argia put Polynices' corpse on Eteocles' pyre by accident, the divided flames are a symbol of their enmity continuing beyond death (*Theb.* 12.429–36). Scholars generally see this as an overt reference to Statius; Pomeroy even refers to it as “homage,” but the tone seems to me much more to belittle Statius than to flatter him. The central event of Statius' entire poem becomes a gladiatorial fight between two barbarians; his gigantic epic is miniaturized into one fight among many, set as a game within the context of (serious) Roman historical battles.²³

We could still think of Statius as working against Silius in his sword fight, though: the Silian reference is to the *Thebaid* as a whole; Statius' sword fight features Polynices himself, and Adrastus stops the event in order to keep him (and the reason for the expedition) safe. The aborted fight is very much an omen of his death (*Theb.* 6.911–23). By excluding the fight with its gladiatorial overtones from his games (and ostentatiously erasing it, like an act of aggressively visible *damnatio memoriae*), Statius could be suggesting that Silius' games are not *proper* epic games.²⁴ With their Roman historical context, they have gone beyond the bounds of epic acceptability. What is more, Silius has brought real and concrete death within the controlled bounds of the games, making Scipio's control of the games slightly barbaric.²⁵ In the Homeric fight, echoed in the Virgilian boxing, the master of ceremonies intervenes to protect the lives of the competitors. Silius' Scipio, unlike Livy's, does not even attempt to persuade the rivals not to fight. If Statius' aborted fight is reacting against Silius' transformation of the Virgilian boxing into all out gladiatorial games, it makes a stronger

seems perverse to suggest that he could write at that time and in that place without some awareness at least of the *Thebaid*. Pomeroy (1989), however, has no compunction in seeing this episode in particular as a “homage” to Statius (120), following Venini (1969); Ahl (1986) 2814–16 also sees this as a clear echo of Statius. On the episode, see also McGuire (1997) 98–100, Marks (2005a) 183–85, and Ariemma (2008).

²³ König (2005) 249 uses the differences between Statius and Silius productively: “Silius' uncharacteristic ‘understatement’ and the very unStatian suppression of conspicuous and apocalyptic tensions within his representations of heroic virtue, may itself, I suggest be a provocative enactment of the way in which Roman culture has been driven to selective blindness and desensitisation in its viewing of political violence.”

²⁴ For recent literature on the theory and practice of *damnatio memoriae*, see Vout (2008).

²⁵ König (2005) 250: “Silius' audience, the games' orchestrator, Scipio, included, accept almost without hesitation whatever fate presents them with.”

point that it would do read on its own against Homer and Virgil. So for this event, reading both ways is productive for both texts.

In the foot-race, the two texts use the same trick, developed and distinct from Homer and Virgil, but in very different ways.²⁶ In Homer, Ajax Oileus slips over and loses; in Virgil, Nisus trips the leader to allow his beloved Euryalus to win. In Statius, Parthenopaeus (one of the Seven and an equally beautiful boy) is solidly in the lead, but coming second, Idas pulls him back by his hair and passes him:

flauus ab intonso pendebat uertice crinis
 Arcados; hoc primis Triuiæ pascebat ab annis
 munus et, Ogygio uictor cum Marte redisset,
 nequiquam patriis audax promiserat aris.
 tunc liber nexu lateque in terga solutus
 occursu Zephyri retro fugit et simul ipsum
 impedit infestoque uolans obtenditur Idæ.
 inde dolum iuuenis fraudique accommoda sensit
 tempora; iam finem iuxta, dum limina uictor
 Parthenopæus init, correpto crine reductum
 occupat, et longe primus ferit ostia portæ. (*Theb.* 6.607–17)

Blond hair was hanging down from the unshorn head of the Arcadian; this he used to nourish from his earliest years as a gift to Diana and, when he returned as a victor from the Theban war, in vain the bold boy had promised it to his ancestral altars. At that moment it is free from any binding and, spread loose, wide on his back, it flees backwards from its meeting with the West wind and at the same time hinders him and, flying, is spread before hostile Idas. From this, the young man noticed a trick and a moment suitable for deceit; now they are right next to the finishing line, Parthenopaeus is going over the threshold as victor, and he seizes him dragging him back by his hair which he had snatched, and by far the first strikes the door of the gate.

Parthenopaeus' Arcadian supporters are enraged and threaten to storm the stadium, but Adrastus decides that the race should be re-run and Parthenopaeus duly wins. Compare the moment in Silius' running. Eurytus, the favorite, is in the lead, followed by Hesperos,

²⁶ Spaltenstein (1990) 433 notes the similarity between the two denouements and suggests that Silius may have been imitating Statius.

when Theron comes from the back of the pack, passes Hesperos, and is challenging Eurytus for the lead:

aequantur cursus, pariterque ruebant.
 et forsan gemina meruissent praemia palma,
 peruecti simul ad metas, ni, terga secutus
 Theronis fusam late per lactea colla
 Hesperos ingenti tenuisset saeuus ab ira
 traxissetque comam. tardato laetus ouansque
 Eurytus euadit iuvene atque ad praemia uictor
 emicat et galeae fert donum insigne coruscae. (*Pun.* 16.516–23)

Their courses come level, and they were rushing on side by side. And perhaps they would have deserved twin rewards and victory palms, when they had reached the goal at the same time, if Hesperos, following behind the back of Theron, made savage by his great anger, had not held onto and dragged back the hair spread widely over Theron's milky neck. When the young man had been slowed down, the joyful and exulting Eurytus escapes him and flashes forward as victor for the prizes and carries off the outstanding gift of a glittering helmet.

The two accounts share verbal reminiscences (*terga solutus* and *terga secutus*; *late* and *late* of the hair), and here it seems convincing that Silius is re-working Statius. Statius spends several lines setting the situation up, explaining why Parthenopaeus had such long hair and taking us through the thought processes of Idas, but dealing with the actual moment in a compressed and slightly obscure way. How, exactly, could Idas get ahead of Parthenopaeus at the last moment by pulling his hair?²⁷ Surely all he could succeed in doing would be to slow them both down? Silius starts as if it were a familiar situation but seems to set out to correct Statius' version: it is not one of the front runners that pulls the hair, but the runner in third place, resentful because he has been overtaken. He slows down the challenger, and allows the favorite to win. The story is also more integral to Statius' *Thebaid* because the motif of Parthenopaeus' hair returns in book 9 in the scene of his death, when he realizes that his refusal to cut it has been in vain and he offers it to be buried instead of his body (*Theb.* 9.900–6). Statius' games in general are more obviously interwoven with the rest of the

²⁷ On counterfactuals in the games in the *Punica*, see Cowan in this volume (336).

poem, not least because his major heroes compete, while Silius' games are mainly populated by figures who do not appear elsewhere in the text.

Silius seems also to be making an effort to exceed Statius. All his runners are beautiful and all deserve to win the race:

grex inclitus aequore fertur
nullaque tramissa uestigia signat harena.
omnes primaeui flautiaque ora decori,
omnes ire leues atque omnes uincere digni. (Pun. 16.484–87)

The famous herd is carried along on the plain and marks no footprints on the sand which they had passed. All were in the first flower of youth, all had faces fair in beauty, all went lightly and all deserved to win.

The paradox of the “famous herd” (where *inclitus* would normally mark someone who precisely stood out from the herd) brings out the way that Silius is making his running superior to Statius' by applying the epithets and concepts which Statius uses only for his winner to all his competitors. This passage builds on three moments in Statius: Parthenopaeus' dramatic entrance at *Theb.* 6.561–68, which emphasizes his fame as the son of Atalanta, with his beauty at *Theb.* 6.571–82, along with the re-run:

auditum manifesta fides: uix campus euntem
sentit, et exilis plantis interuenit aer,
raraque non fracto uestigia puluere pendent. (Theb. 6.638–40)

There was clear proof that he had been heard: scarcely does the field feel him as he goes, and the slender air holds up his feet, and his light footsteps hang without breaking the dust.

Although both texts stem from Virgil's description of Camilla (*Aen.* 7.808–11), Virgil's Amazon skims over crops and waves, while both Statius and Silius focus on footsteps and the ground.

There is an intriguing further dimension to the connection between the two races. Silius' choice of names for his runners hints at a moment of one-up-manship: almost a foul in the race of epic. For the runner who pulls the hair is called Hesperos, and in Statius' running, Parthenopaeus is compared to Hesperus shining brighter than the other stars in a simile (*Theb.* 6.578–82).²⁸ Having noticed this resemblance,

²⁸ Spaltenstein (1990) 429 reads the name Hesperus as reflecting his origin in the far West. McGuire (1997) 136–44 has convincingly shown how Silius uses allusive names to great effect in the wider context of the whole poem.

we might read into the name Eurytus a similarity to Virgil's Euryalus. In which case, Silius is simultaneously vindicating Virgil and doing Statius down. Eurytus wins without question, allowing Silius to ratify Aeneas' moral judgment in the *Aeneid* when he allows Euryalus' victory to stand, despite Nisus' less than sporting intervention, and even gives a prize to Nisus. Silius even exonerates Euryalus by removing Eurytus entirely from the controversy. Or should this rather be read as a moral correction of Virgil? Parthenopaeus, however, is recast as the resentful and destructive Hesperus, turning Statius' victim and victor into the second rate perpetrator of the foul. Whether we read Silius as following or competing with Virgil, he is certainly pulling Statius' hair!

So far we have assumed that Silius is the pursuer of Statius. One moment in the imagery, however, works well in the other direction. At the start of Silius' race, he describes his runners as springing forward faster than arrows: *exsiluere per auras/ocius effusis neruo exturbante sagittis* ("they jumped out through the breezes more swiftly than arrows poured out from a shooting string," *Pun.* 16.480–81).²⁹ Statius has the same image, including the verb *ex(s)ilio*, but adds to it a further extended simile:

credas e plebe Cydonum
Parthorumque fuga totidem exiluisse sagittas.
non aliter, celeres Hyrcana per auia cerui
cum procul impasti fremitum accepere leonis
siue putant, rapit attonitos fuga caeca metusque
congregat, et longum dant cornua mixta fragorem. (*Theb.* 6.596–601)

You would believe that as many arrows had jumped out from the Cydonian people or the flight of the Parthians. Not otherwise do swift stags in the Hyrcanian wilderness, when they hear the roar of a hungry lion from afar (or think they do), snatch themselves thunderstruck in blind flight, while fear gathers them together so that their clashing horns make a loud clatter.

Statius' *credas* could be acting as an Alexandrian footnote signaling his allusion; and "jump out" certainly comes more naturally in a description of people than of inanimate arrows; the elaborate image of the stags brings us back into hunting, which has been Parthenopaeus' realm up to this point. In this case, Statius seems to be elaborating Silius. On the other hand, this could be a deliberate move by Silius to suppress Statian excess. Silius' games are generally much briefer than

²⁹ Spaltenstein (1990) 431 says "cette comparaison est habituelle."

Statius': his running (*Pun.* 16.457–526) is 69 lines long, while Statius' (*Theb.* 6.550–645) is 95 lines. Whichever way we read this, the narrative of poetic rivalry is compelling and revealing.

The javelin can also be read both ways fruitfully. Silius finishes his games with a javelin event, followed by honorific javelin throwing, in which first Laelius and Scipio's brother throw javelins in honor of the dead, and then Scipio himself throws a javelin, which lands, takes root, sprouts, and miraculously transforms into a fully grown tree. This works against both Homer and Virgil: the final event in the Iliadic games is the javelin, in which Agamemnon is about to compete, when Achilles stops the event and awards the prize to him; in the *Aeneid*, the final event is archery. The contest has already been won and Acestes has no mark left, so he shoots an arrow into the air, and it bursts into flames. Aeneas reads this as a positive omen and proceeds to found a city for Acestes to rule, but it can be read negatively, as a foreshadowing both of the destruction of the ships and of the war to come.³⁰ Statius, too, finishes with an archery display: every hero has had his event, when they ask Adrastus to honor the games himself:

ipsum etiam proprio certamina festa labore
dignari et tumulis supremum hunc addere honorem
hortantur proceres ac, ne uictoria desit
una ducum numero, fundat uel Lyctia cornu
tela rogant, tenui uel nubila transeat hasta. (*Theb.* 6.924–28)

The chiefs encourage even him to dignify the festive competitions with his own labor and to add this final honor to the tomb and, so that one victory would not be lacking to each of the leaders, they ask him either to pour out Lyctian weapons with his bow or to cross the clouds with the slender spear.

In *Iliad* 23, the javelin follows the archery; Adrastus is here asked to choose between archery or javelin. Virgil combined the two by adding the extra honorific shot to the archery; Silius did the same but with the javelin, having a javelin competition followed by honorific javelin throwing. Adrastus' choice seems much more pointed if he is choosing between Virgil and Silius.³¹ When Laelius and Scipio's brother make honorific throws, the wording seems very similar to Statius': *inuabat*/...

³⁰ König (2005) 250 sees this as another moment of Silian suppression, where the Virgilian ambiguity and Statian negativity are replaced with "an ostensibly straightforward interpretation."

³¹ Silius does refer to his javelin as *hastam* at 16.570.

hoc decus addere ludis (“it pleased them to add this honor to the games,” *Pun.* 16.578–79).³² This seems to suggest once more that Silius is reading Statius. The representation of Scipio adds to this impression: for when Scipio himself caps the offering of Laelius and his brother (*con- torquet magnis uitricem uiribus hastam/consurgens umbrisque dari testatur honorem*, “rising, he hurls a victorious spear with his great strength and bears witness to the honor given to the shades,” *Pun.* 16.584–85), *uitricem* and *magnis uiribus* both suggest that he wins this contest of honor.³³ This honorific competition allows Scipio to win his own games, unlike Adrastus, whose display shot returns to his feet in a slightly bathetic omen. Scipio thus wins over both the other honorific throwers and Adrastus.

Scipio’s omen, of the spear bursting into life, also reacts against Statius’ pessimistic reading of the ambivalent omen in the *Aeneid*. In the *Aeneid*, it is not clear what the significance of the *exitus ingens* is, what the omens are, and why the prophets are *terrifici*:

hic oculis subitum obicitur magnoque futurum
augurio monstrum; docuit post exitus ingens
seraque terrifici cecinerunt omina uates.
namque uolans liquidis in nubibus arsit harundo
signauitque uiam flammis tenuisque recessit
consumpta in uentos, caelo ceu saepe refixa
transcurreunt crinemque uolantia sidera ducunt. (*Aen.* 5.522–28)

Now before the eyes occurred a sudden omen of the future with great significance; the huge outcome taught us afterwards, and the terrifying prophets sang the late omens. For the arrow, flying through the liquid clouds, burned and marked its way with flames and slender retreated consumed into the winds, just as often stars fall out of the sky and run across it, flying and dragging their tails behind them.

Statius shows us characters who cannot read the omens, along with an authorially endorsed interpretation which takes the darkest route:

multa duces errore serunt: hi nubila et altos
occurrisse Notos, aduersi roboris ictu
tela repulsa alii. penitus latet exitus ingens

³² Spaltenstein (1990) 437 notes this resemblance and uses it to argue against a reading which sees Laelius and Scipio’s brother joining in for pleasure’s sake.

³³ As Spaltenstein suggests (437). See Marks (2005a) 179–86 for an analysis of Scipio as Romulus.

monstratumque nefas: uni remeabile bellum,
et tristes domino spondebat harundo recursus. (*Theb.* 6.942–46)

The leaders weave many things in error: some say that the arrow met the clouds and the high south winds, others that the weapon was pushed back by the blow of the tree opposite. But the huge outcome lies hidden deep within and the omened crime: this war allows return only to one man, and the arrow was promising a grim journey back to its lord.

In Silius, however, the omen is so clearly positive that its outcome has already happened:

hasta uolans, mirum dictu, medio incita campo
substitit ante oculos et terrae infixæ cohaesit;
tum subitæ frondes celsoque cacumine rami
et latam spargens quercus, dum nascitur, umbram.
ad maiora iubent praesagi tendere uates.
id monstrare deos atque hoc portendere signis. (*Pun.* 16.586–91)

The flying spear, wonderful to say, rushing headlong in the middle of the plain stopped short before their eyes and stuck, fixed in the earth; then sudden leaves and branches appeared in the high tree-top, and an oak, scattering shade widely from the moment it was born. The clairvoyant prophets order him to reach for greater things. The gods point that out and show this with their signs.

Silius takes the Homeric and Virgilian paradigm of the omen in the games and puts a moment from the Roman historical end of another epic, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*:³⁴

utue Palatinis haerentem collibus olim
cum subito uidit frondescere Romulus hastam,
quæ radice noua, non ferro stabat adacto
et iam non telum, sed lentî uiminis arbor
non expectatas dabat admirantibus umbras; (*Met.* 15.560–64)

Or as when Romulus saw the spear which once stuck in the Palatine hills suddenly growing leafy, with a new root, not standing driven in on iron, and now no longer a weapon, but a tree tough and wiry which was giving unexpected shade to those watching in amazement.

³⁴ Spaltenstein (1990) 438.

Here Ovid uses Romulus' spear into tree moment as the paradigm of prophetic omens in Roman history, and Silius links Scipio to Romulus, and victory in the Punic war to the founding of Rome, through this image of a weapon made of dead wood turning into a live and shade-giving tree. Statius and Silius have used diametrically opposed tactics in this final event, whether reacting against each other, or simply going down different routes independently of each other.

Finally, I turn back to the chariot-race, first event in both sets of games, and one that seems to resound in both directions. Let us begin with those moments where Silius seems to look back to Statius. In his description of the horses, Panchates bears a marked resemblance to Statius' hero Tydeus:

ingentes animi, membra haud procera decusque
corporis exiguum, sed tum sibi fecerat alas
concitus atque ibat campo indignatus habenas.
crescere sublimem atque augeri membra putares. (*Pun.* 16.350–53)

He had huge spirits, though his limbs were not long, and he had little glory of body, but when he was stirred up, he made wings for himself and ran over the plain angry at the reins. You would think that he was growing tall and that his limbs were increasing.

Tydeus is twice described as small in stature but large in spirit, and Silius' description makes several verbal echoes. In the games he contrasts with Agylleus:

quamquam ipse uideri
exiguus, grauiā ossa tamen nodisque lacerti
difficiles. numquam hunc animum natura minori
corpore nec tantas ausa est includere uires. (*Theb.* 6.843–46)

Although he himself seemed little, nevertheless his bones were heavy and his arms were tightly muscled. Never has nature dared to shut in such great strength and such spirit in a lesser body.

and in book 1, with Polynices:

celsior ille gradu procera in membra simulque
integer annorum; sed non et uiribus infra
Tydea fert animus, totosque infusa per artus
maior in exiguo regnabat corpore uirtus. (*Theb.* 1.414–17)

He was taller in step, with long limbs, and at the same time in his prime; but spirit carries Tydeus, not beneath him in strength, and greater courage, spread through his whole frame, rules in a small body.

Tydeus is the most heroic of Statius' seven heroes, despite the fact that he is vertically challenged, and it would be a typically Silian move to belittle him even further by turning him into a horse.

The other three echoes bring out Silius' greater focus on the audience of his chariot-race. One passage of Silius describing his audience draws on three different Statian moments:

et toto prima emicuit uix ungula cornu,
tollitur in caelum furiali turbine clamor.
pronique ac similes certantibus ore sequuntur
quisque suos currus magnaue uolantibus idem
uoce loquuntur equis. quatitur certamine circus
spectantum,³⁵ ac nulli mentem non abstulit ardor.
instant praecipites³⁶ et equos clamore gubernant. (Pun. 16.318–24)

And the first hoof had scarcely flashed out into full view, when the shouting was raised to the sky in a maddened whirlwind. Leaning forward, similar to those competing, each follows his chariot with his face and speaks at the same time with a great shout to the flying horses. The circus is shaken by the struggle of those urging on, and enthusiasm takes away the minds of all. They press on headlong and drive the horses with their shouting.

Statius' drivers are *proni* at *Theb.* 6.416 (*nunc auidi prono iuga pectore tangunt*, "now the drivers greedy for success touch the yokes with their chests bent forward"): Statius is defamiliarizing the description by removing an epithet from horse to driver. Silius goes one step further by moving it from driver to audience. When Polynices is losing control of his chariot, a crash shakes the sky: *subit astra fragor, caelumque tremescit* ("the crash reaches the stars and makes the sky tremble," *Theb.* 6.448). Silius keeps *spectantum* for the next line, allowing the first time reader to assume that the struggle is the race itself, not, as it turns out, the rivalries of the audience. In Statius, Amphiarus suffers from a sort of madness in his desire to pass the driverless Arion at the end of the race, but in Silius it is the audience who have lost their minds.³⁷

³⁵ I follow Summers' conjecture *spectantum*, though Delz follows Bentley's and Ruperti's *hortantum*, but as he notes in the apparatus: *male de aurigis* ("wrong use for charioteers").

³⁶ I follow Heinsius' and Dausqueius' *praecipites* (also printed in Duff), instead of Delz's *praeceptis*.

³⁷ On the madness of Amphiarus, see Lovatt (2001).

Instant praecipites plays a similar trick: *praeceps* would more naturally be used of something in motion, like the chariots, but Silius here uses it of the audience. This phrase echoes Statius' description of the clashes between chariots, which begins *rursus praecipites* ("again headlong," *Theb.* 6.454); both phrases occur at the start of the hexameter and have the same metrical shape. Silius, then, uses Statius as a way of underlining his own innovation in transferring the descriptions of the racing horses and charioteers onto the fanatical spectators. The Silian cosmos is shaken by the desires and partisanship of his chariot hooligans, but as König points out, this does not carry over into the power structure of the games: bread and circuses are separated from political dissent, in a typically Silian act of suppression.³⁸

Immediately after this passage, however, there is a similarity which seems to work the other way around. Silius describes how the cloud of dust stops the audience seeing what is happening:³⁹

fuluus harenosa surgens tellure sub auras
erigitur globus atque operit caligine densa
cornipedumque uias aurigarumque labores. (*Pun.* 16.325–27)

A tawny cloud, rising from the sandy earth, stood up under the breezes and concealed in a dense darkness the routes of the horses and the toils of the charioteers.

Surprisingly, perhaps, given his emphasis on the audience, Silius does not go into the effects of this cloud on the spectator's view. Statius, however, takes it much further:

et iam rapti oculis, iam caeco puluere mixti
una in nube latent, uultusque umbrante tumultu
uix inter sese clamore et nomine noscunt.
euoluere globum, et spatium quo quisque ualebat
diducti. (*Theb.* 6.411–15)

And now they were snatched from the eyes, now they lie hidden in one cloud, mixed in blind dust, and with the tumult shading their faces they can scarcely distinguish each other by shouts and names. They roll out from the cloud and each is led out into a space according to strength.

³⁸ König (2005) 249–50.

³⁹ Spaltenstein (1990) 419 points to Virgil's *G.* 3.110–11 (*at fulvae nimbus harenae tollitur*, "but a cloud of tawny sand is raised up") as the ultimate source but also notes the similarity with Statius.

Stattius' cloud is so hyperbolically dense that not only the audience but even the competitors cannot see what is happening. Stattius' race seems to up the stakes: might it be read as coming after Silius' race?

So far we have looked at the chariot race on the level of fine detail: on the macro-level, in terms of structure, there are also arguments for reading Stattius as the back runner. Silius has four chariots and, as in Virgil's ship-race, Durius comes from the back almost to win. He follows Homer very closely in other respects: Durius and Atlas clash violently with the young confident Durius outplaying the elderly Atlas, like Antilochus and Menelaus; finally, Durius fails to overtake Hiberus because, at the last moment, he drops his whip; in the *Iliad*, Apollo makes Diomedes drop his whip, but Athena picks it up again for him, and in revenge wrecks Eumelus' chariot. Stattius' race is quite different and is again open to the charge of excess. He has seven competitors, who race in pairs: Hippodamus and Chromis, Thoas and Euneos, Admetus and Amphiarus, and, out on his own, paired against his own horse, Polynices. There were many different types of race in the Roman chariot racing calendar: Silius' race resembles a straightforward race between the lead drivers of the four colors (one of his charioteers even wears red: Hiberus, *Pun.* 16.354); Stattius' race is perhaps more like the sort of race in which each color ran two chariots, one of whom would act as pacemaker and strategic running mate for the other.⁴⁰ Stattius has doubled Silius' version, and the language of doubling runs through the race.⁴¹ Equally on a structural level, Silius presents his race in two halves: *Iamque fere medium euecti certamine campum, / in spatio addebant...* ("and now when they had been carried in their struggle almost over half the course, they were draw-

⁴⁰ The main source for this practice is a description in Sidonius' *Carm.* 23.307–427 which gives a vivid description of a team race. See Cameron (1976) 51–53; Harris (1972) 198–205 on Diocles the Red. In the *Thebaid*, Thoas and Euneos set out to help each other as much as compete against each other. Stattius states specifically that their aims are either to win or lose only to each other: *geminis eadem omnia: uultus, / currus, equi, uestes, par et concordia uotis, / uincere uel solo cupiunt a fratre relinqui* ("twins, the same in everything: face, chariot, horses, clothes, equal and in concord in their prayers, they desire either to conquer or to be left behind only by their brother," *Theb.* 6.343–45).

⁴¹ Doubling is an important Statian theme: see Hardie (1993a). Of Thoas and Euneos: *geminis*, 6.343; *gemi*, 6.433; of Chromis and Hippodamus: *alter... alter*, 6.346–47; *ambo*, 6.349; two *metae*, 6.351–54; of Admetus and Amphiarus, *ambo... ambo*, 6.374; of the horses: *duplicantur*, 6.417; *anceps Fortuna*, 6.474; *gemi*, 6.531 (twin youths bring out the prize). It could be argued that the Flavian poet might just as easily be doubling the Virgilian ship-race; the argument here is cumulative, but I accept that we can not provide a guarantee.

ing apart," *Pun.* 16.372–73). It is at this point, at the beginning of the second half of the race, that Panchates picks up his pace as if straight out of the starting gates: *ceu tunc e carcere primo/corriperet spatium* ("as if he were snatching space just out of the starting gate," *Pun.* 16.394–95). Statius also uses this idea, but he uses it of Amphiaraus as he is bringing the race to a close, again intensifying the hyperbole: *ceu modo carceribus dimissus in arua solutis* ("as if just now sent out into the fields when the starting gates had been released," *Theb.* 6.522). Virgil's race is one continuum; Silius' race comes in two parts; Statius multiplies his race into many races within the race.⁴²

We have seen how Silius in the foot-race took Statius' motif of the beautiful boy who deserves to win and broadened it out to make all his boys beautiful; in a similar way, Statius seems to be playing with Silius' use of direct speech in the chariot-race. Hiberus gives a stirring speech of encouragement to Panchates:

tene, Astur, certante feret quisquam aequore palmam
 erepto? consurge, uola, perlabere campum
 adsuētis uelox pennis. decrescit anhelō
 pectore consumptus Lampon, nec restat hianti,
 quem ferat ad metas, iam spiritus. (*Pun.* 16.389–93)

With you competing, Asturian, will anyone carry off the palm when they have snatched the race? Rise up, fly, glide over the plain, swift with your accustomed wings. Lampon grows smaller, his panting chest consumed; no breath now remains to carry him to the goal as he gasps.

Thus spurred on, he overtakes the front runner. But later in the race, Durius encourages Pelorus:

genitore, Pelore,
 te Zephyro eductum nunc nunc ostendere tempus.
 discant, qui pecudum ducunt ab origine nomen,
 quantum diuini praecellat seminis ortus.
 uictor dona dabis statuesque altaria patri. (*Pun.* 16.426–30)

Now, now, Pelorus, is the time to show that you were brought up with Zephyrus as your father. Let them learn, those who draw their names from herd animals, how much someone born from divine seed surpasses them. As victor you will give gifts and set up altars to your father.

⁴² See Lovatt (2005) 23–39 on multiplication and repetition in Statius' chariot-race.

Statius plays with these speeches in two ways. First, all his charioteers give stirring speeches to their horses and call them by name:

nec iam sufficiunt stimuli, non uerbera; uoce
 nominibusque cient Pholoen Admetus et Irin
 funalemque Thoen, rapidum Danaeius augur
 Ascheton increpitans meritumque uocabula Cycnum.
 audit et Herculeum Strymon Chromin, Euneon audit
 igneus Aetion; tardumque Cydona lacessit
 Hippodamus, uariumque Thoas rogat ire Podarcen.
 solus Echionides errante silentia curru
 maesta tenet trepidaque timet se uoce fateri. (*Theb.* 6.460–68)

Spurs and blows were no longer enough; Admetus and Thoas stir up Pholoe and Iris and trace horse Thoe with names and voices, the Danaan prophet shouts at swift Aschetos and Cygnus, deservedly named. Strymon hears Herculean Chromis and fiery Aethion hears Euneos; Hippodamus rebukes slow Cydon and Thoas begs variable Podarces to go faster. Only Polynices keeps a sad silence in his wandering chariot and fears to confess his situation with his panicked voice.

The virtuoso list of Greek names, variations in structure, and the swift movement through the whole field underlines Statius' learning and creates a strong contrast with Polynices' silence. On the other hand, it could be read as parodic in tone, highlighting the conventionality (and unreality) of addresses to horses in this situation and making a particular dig at Silius, who frequently refers to the chariots by the name of the lead horse, interchangeably with the driver, making his race particularly difficult to follow.⁴³ Further, Statius makes a dig at the content of Durius' speech to Pelorus, in which Pelorus is urged to show his divine pedigree, by insisting that not only all his horses, but even all his drivers, are of divine ancestry:

terrarum decora ampla uiri, decora aequa iugales,
 diuum utrumque genus... (*Theb.* 6.391–92)

The heroes are the full glory of their lands, the horses equally glorious, both are races born from the gods.

⁴³ Duff in the Loeb translation italicizes the names of the horses to make the context clearer.

Most striking of all, however, is the twist which Statius gives to the Atlas–Durius episode in Silius. At *Pun.* 16.401–15, Durius and Atlas, bringing up the rear, clash, and Durius in his youthful boldness forces Atlas out of his way, causing him to be ‘ship-wrecked.’ This melds together the episode in Homer where Antilochus forces Menelaus out of his way, and later apologizes, with the episode in Virgil where Menoetes, the elderly helmsman, is thrown overboard by his captain for allowing them to be passed, as they round the turning-post.⁴⁴ Statius’ two last drivers, Chromis and Hippodamus are both macabre offspring of myth: Chromis is the son of Hercules and Hippodamus the son of Oenomaus, who according to this version of the myth, used to defeat men in chariot-races and then throw them to his horses to be eaten (*Theb.* 6.479–90). The ship simile at *Theb.* 6.483–84 marks the Virgilian connection, which is clear in Silius in the pathos with which he describes the old man Atlas (*perfracto uoluitur axe/cernuus, ac pariter fusi, miserabile, campo/discordes sternuntur equi*, “he is rolled out with his axle broken, head first, and, wretchedly, the chaotic horses are spread out equally, laid low on the field,” *Pun.* 16.411–13). Scipio then gives him a consolation prize, imitating Aeneas’ consolation prize to Sergestus and his wrecked ship. Statius, though, brings out the dark side of racing: not only does Polynices have a near-death experience, but Hippodamus would have been eaten by his own horses, had it not been for the selfless (and unrewarded) action of Chromis. This is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the intertextual recycling, with the threat of cannibalistic intertextuality hanging over the episode. Just as Statius questions the outcome of the running by giving a second race, so he questions the outcome of the chariot-race by leaving Chromis unrewarded, having Adrastus give a consolation prize to his own incompetent son-in-law and giving ultimate victory to the riderless Arion. Or we could read this the other way again and see Silius sanitizing Statius, turning the gore and horror into decorous epic repetition.

This exercise in reading both ways leaves me with the strong impression that the two poems have a complex relationship displaying the cut and thrust of mutual competition. The most productive narrative is that in which poets are writing, or at least reciting and revising, at the same time. This allows us to see true interplay, an athletic poetics at work, in which both self-consciously compete with each other,

⁴⁴ Spaltenstein (1990) 425 notes the similarity with Homer, but not Virgil.

belittle, exceed, suppress, sanitize, and miniaturize, questioning each other's choices and their own. A detailed study of the wider interplay between the two poems, and of both poets' engagement with Valerius Flaccus, must be a major priority of research into Flavian epic in the near future.

C. The *Punica*: Themes and Images

a. *Silius and the Tradition of Exemplary Heroism*

CHAPTER EIGHT

HERCULES AS A PARADIGM OF ROMAN HEROISM

Paolo Asso*

In reshaping the historical material on the Second Punic War, Silius' boldest statement is located in restoring the gods as active participants in Roman epic narrative. Hercules is the mythical character that yields the most insight for our assessment of what paradigms of heroism operate in Silius' Roman epic. Here I will recall my previous treatment of Hercules as a paradigm of "human divinity" in light of other critics' discussion of the question of the epic 'hero' and in particular of Roman heroism in Silius' poem.¹

Silius' choice of including the gods in his narrative feels inevitably problematic, especially after Lucan's pessimistic exclusion of god's design in human affairs. Silius' gods and goddesses intervene in defense of their champions on the battlefield, and like their Virgilian counterparts, they indulge in travesties and stratagems, call on Jove's support, and summon the furies from Hell. The Silian deities, however, stand conspicuously more massive than Virgil's Juno, Venus, Jove, and Allecto. Silius' divine machinery contributes to grand scenarios on the battlefield, as when, for instance, Juno disguises herself at Cannae (10.83–90) to urge Hannibal to kill Paulus, or at Zama, when she intervenes to reinvigorate Hannibal's doomed resistance against the Romans, to no avail.²

While Juno's function is chiefly to fuel the Carthaginian's anti-Roman energy, Silius exploits Hercules as a paradigm of heroism and a model for Hannibal himself. The significance of Hercules, however, relies also on the literary pedigree of the divinized hero, which the

* A version of the present essay has appeared in Asso (2003). I would like to thank Antony Augoustakis for his useful suggestions.

¹ My approach to epic heroism is primarily informed by Feeney (1986b) and also by the remarks on Lucan's hero in Getty (1940) xxiv–xxix. On Hercules as heroic paradigm, I am also indebted to Tipping in the present volume (196, 206, 209, 212–14, 216).

² For a helpful survey of Silius' characteristic use of the mythological, divine apparatus, see Vinchesi (2001) 22–23.

poet explores by means of aetiological discourse, as seen in the etymological *aition* for the name of Saguntum, a city sacred to Hercules.

Silius' Hercules claims a place of honor from the very beginning of the poem. In the narrative of the siege of Saguntum in the first two books of the *Punica*, the Spanish town is associated with Hercules via the figure of Zacynthos, who accompanies Hercules back from Geryon's island. By including this foundational story, Silius aims at establishing and strengthening the close link between Rome and Saguntum through the figure of Hercules. Saguntum's heroic, yet doomed, resistance to Hannibal gives the poet the opportunity to cast the Saguntines as a paradigm of Herculean heroism. Before showing how the Saguntines' sacrifice is paradigmatically Herculean, let us first analyze the genesis of Silius' aetiological tale.

1. *Hercules as a model for Hannibal*

In presenting the story of Saguntum's past, Silius indulges in aetiological etymology, deriving the city's name from Zacynthos, a young companion of Hercules, who dies and is buried on the site where the city now stands.³ Though Silius does not invent the anecdote of Zacynthos' death, he rearranges his material to give prominence to the figure of the young founder and to his friend, Hercules.⁴ As Feeney rightly argues, Silius portrays Zacynthos as the offspring of Dardanus, who is the Trojan ancestor of the Roman race, and thus creates a strong link between the Romans and the Saguntines.⁵ The poet also underscores the Saguntines' mixed origin: to the Graeco-Iberian stock, he adds the Italic element of the Rutulians from Ardea.⁶ Furthermore, a strong association of Saguntum and Rome, based on the Greek/Italic origins

³ In the context of Hercules' western wanderings, cf. Liv. *Per.* 60 on the naming of the Balearic islands similarly from a friend of Hercules.

⁴ Strabo calls Saguntum a "Zacynthian foundation" (κτίσμα Ζακυνθίων, 3.4.6), while Livy clearly indicates that Saguntum's name was thought to derive from the name of the Greek island (*oriundi a Zacyntho insula dicuntur*, 21.7.2); cf. Feeney (1982) 155–57 and Spaltenstein (1986) 48. See Hübner (1893) 46 on *arse sacen*, a name attested on many early coins, where *sacen* could refer to the town's name, rendered by Polybius as Ζάκυνθα (3.17.2) and probably originally *Sacantum*, before its change into Saguntum.

⁵ In *Nat.* 16.216, Pliny dates the foundation of Saguntum two hundred years before the fall of Troy, five generations before Aeneas; see Feeney (1982) 155.

⁶ See Asso (1999).

of the Spanish town, functions as a prelude to Hannibal's attack on Rome.⁷

This brief aetiological narrative on the mythical founder of Saguntum (1.273–93) bridges two sections of Silius' story: the succession at the command of the Punic army in Spain and Hannibal's siege of the Spanish town. The aetiological etymology of Saguntum from Hercules' companion, Zacynthos, highlights Hercules' link with Saguntum and thereby casts Hannibal's aggression as an impious act of offense to the deity himself. When the Carthaginians succeed in their siege, Silius shows Saguntum's wall, built by Hercules himself (*Herculeus labor*, 1.369), crumbling to pieces:

tandem condensis artae testudinis armis
subducti Poeni uallo caecaque latebra
pandunt prolapsam suffossis moenibus urbem.
terribilem in sonitum procumbens aggere uicto
Herculeus labor atque immania saxa resoluens
mugitum ingentem dedit. Alpibus altis
aeriae rupes scopulorum mole reuulsa
haud aliter scindunt resonanti fragmine montem. (*Pun.* 1.365–72)

After finally bringing together their shields to form the close-packed tortoise, the Carthaginians retreat from the trench, and hiding under their shields, they open the city by digging beneath the wall until it collapses. Once the rampart gives in, the Herculean labor falls over in massive blocks, as in a frightening roar it crumbles down while emitting a loud bellowing; just like when on top of the Alps, the aerial peaks, their rocky masses detached, divide the mountain in a roaring avalanche.⁸

The terrifying roar of the crumbling wall is described as a “loud bellowing” (*mugitum ingentem*, 1.370) and compared to the sound made by a high-mountain landslide.

The attentive reader recognizes in *mugitum ingentem* an echo of several Virgilian loci. In the *Aeneid*, the noun *mugitus* and the verb *mugire* occasionally describe a roaring sound produced by the earth shaking as a result of some supernatural potency,⁹ but in fact they properly

⁷ On the importance of the first two books of the *Punica* as a preface to the Hannibalic war against Rome, see Küppers (1986) *passim*. On the Saguntum episode, see Bernstein extensively in this volume (390–95).

⁸ Translations are my own.

⁹ In religious context, the earth bellows: Virg. *Aen.* 3.91–92 (Apollo's temple at Buthrotum), 4.490–91 (the magical rites at the Hesperides' temple); 6.256 (Aeneas and the Sibyl pouring libations to the dead). Cf. *Pun.* 7.50, the bellows at Hercules' Ara Maxima (*maximaque Herculei mugiuit numinis ara*).

denote the onomatopoeic noise made by cattle.¹⁰ In this sense *mugitus* is once applied to Laocoon in the *Aeneid* in a sacrificial context: Laocoon is about to officiate the sacrifice of a bull (*Aen.* 2.202), when two marine snakes seize him and his sons. In the vain struggle to escape from the tightening spires of the monsters, Laocoon utters *clamores...horrendos* ("a terrible shout," *Aen.* 2.222), described as the mooing of a wounded bull that escapes the sacrificial altar (*qualis mugitus, fugit cum saucius aram / taurus*, *Aen.* 2.223–24). With a brilliant twist, Virgil has turned the presiding priest into the sacrificial victim, while the sacrifice becomes a bad omen, as shown by the type of *mugitus* uttered by Laocoon, which in the simile resembles the sound produced by a sacrificial bull fleeing the altar.¹¹

Silius' use of *mugitus* to describe the roaring sound of Saguntum's collapsed walls echoes Laocoon's *mugitus* and the Virgilian fall of Troy. Silius' *caeca...latebra* (*Pun.* 1.366) recalls the *Argolicas...latebras* ("Greek hiding place") of *Aeneid* 2.55, when Laocoon throws his spear against the belly of the horse, making it resound with the *gemitus* ("groan," *Aen.* 2.53) that should have warned the Trojans against admitting the horse inside the walls of their city. Just like the wooden horse's *gemitus* and Laocoon's *mugitus* forebode Troy's catastrophe, similarly the *mugitus* from the disintegrating walls predicts disasters for Saguntum. The Spanish ally of Rome is thus turned by Silius into another Troy, the quintessential *altera Roma*, and a substitute for it.

Silius' allusiveness, however, goes further than this straightforward Virgilian reminiscence. Silius expounds Hercules' tie to Saguntum and makes Hannibal's attack appear an outrage to the god himself, the protector of the city. In Hannibal's penetration of Saguntum's fortified wall, the *Herculeus labor* of 1.369, one must in fact see both a defeat of Hercules—since he is the one who built the wall—and also a foreshadowing of Hercules' crossing of the Alps, for the falling wall is compared to an Alpine avalanche (*Pun.* 1.370–72). The reference to the Alps alludes to Hannibal's emulation of the hero, as becomes evident in the

¹⁰ OLD s.v. *mugio* 1 and *mugitus* 1; cf. TLL VIII.1558; Virg. *Aen.* 8.215 and 218 (one of Geryon's cattle mooing from Cacus' cave).

¹¹ A common scene in the accounts of prodigies; on unfavorable omens, which might befall those sacrificing, see Fest. p. 287.3–6 Lindsay; cf. also Liv. 21.63.13–14; Suet. *Gal.* 18.1; Tac. *Hist.* 3.56.1; Amm. Marc. 24.6.16. Note especially *Pun.* 5.63–65, where Silius clearly imitates the Laocoon scene from the *Aeneid* (Spaltenstein [1986] 340); a further amplification of the motif is found in 16.262–71 (evil omens at the treaty ceremony between the Romans and the Numidian king Syphax).

Carthaginian's invocation to Hercules (1.511). To be sure, Hannibal is reported to have cast himself as Hercules for propagandistic reasons, following the pattern of Hellenistic kings, as documented by the Herculean themes on Punic coinage from New Carthage in Spain.¹² By associating Hannibal with Hercules, Silius at the same time, however, emphasizes the Carthaginian's hubris and thereby complicates not only his characterization of Hannibal but also his construction of Hercules as a paradigm of heroism, whose exemplary function includes negative as well as positive features.¹³ In his destruction of a city dear to Hercules, how can Hannibal hope for the god's help? Hannibal thinks that Hercules shall overlook the sacrifice of his city, if he gains praise through Hannibal's emulation of his deeds. Hannibal also believes that by breaching Saguntum's Herculean wall, he will establish himself as an emulator of Hercules. Therefore, the Carthaginian general feels entitled to the god's unconditional support. This motivates his invocation of Hercules as the destroyer of cities.¹⁴

As the Saguntines enact a desperate attempt to shield their city from the Punic assault, both besieger and besieged invoke Hercules' support. While the Saguntine Murrus prays to Hercules *conditor* ("the founder"), before confronting Hannibal in single combat, Hannibal himself addresses Hercules, the destroyer of Troy:

¹² Robinson (1956) 39 pl. II.6a–d; Brizzi (1986) 127–28; see also Vinchesi (2001) 28 n. 75. Reviving the hypothesis of a bronze "Hellenistic ruler" from the Museo Nazionale delle Terme (Rome) as the earliest known portrait of Hannibal, Breckinridge (1983) 126–28 re-analyzes the coin types from New Carthage and adds insight into the question of Hannibal as a Hellenistic ruler.

¹³ Moretti (2005) argues that, as the narrative progresses, Silius increasingly distances Hannibal from the positive aspects of Herculean heroism (937), and finally states that Scipio and Hannibal are irreconcilable opposites, because throughout the poem Silius "ha lavorato per smontare l'equazione Annibale = Eracle" (947). Moretti, in other words, poses a dubitable equation and then undoes it to reach a concluding statement. In my view, to see an equation between Hannibal and Hercules in the *Punica* is not merely incorrect, but excessively simplistic. As I am trying to demonstrate in this paper, the nuances of Heracles' paradigmatic heroism defeat any such simplistic equation.

¹⁴ According to Stat. *Silu.* 4.6.69–70, Hercules forgives his 'successor' Alexander the Great for destroying Thebes, the hero's birthplace. According to Statius, Lysippus' statuette formerly belonged to Alexander himself (59–60) and then to Hannibal, which indicates that in the first century AD, it is not uncommon to think of Hannibal as a Hellenized leader and an imitator of Alexander. Coleman (1988) 176 dates Statius' poem on Novius Vindex's Hercules *epitrapezios* to AD 94; Silius may thus have known the poem, if we assume any relation between the two texts/poets (see also Lovatt in this volume [155–76]).

‘cerne’, ait ‘an nostris longe Tiryntius ausis
iustius affuerit. ni displicet aemula uirtus,
haud me dissimilem, Alcide, primoribus annis
agnosces, inuicte, tuis. fer numen amicum
et, Troiae quondam primis memorate ruinis,
dexter ades Phrygiae delenti stirpis alumnos.’ (Pun. 1.509–14)

And Hannibal said: “Consider whether the hero of Tiryns will not far more justly assist our own endeavor. If my imitation of your valor is not displeasing to you, invincible Hercules, you will recognize that I am not unlike you in your earliest years. Favor me with the power of your divinity and, you who are remembered for the earlier ruins of Troy, skillfully assist me as I destroy the descendants of the Phrygian stock.”

In comparing himself to Hercules, Hannibal becomes hubristic.¹⁵ Even though Murrus has just addressed Hercules as *conditor*, in his prayer Hannibal makes no mention of Saguntum and its fallen wall but rather claims that his own *aemula uirtus* (“rivaling manliness”) likens him to the hero in his first, i.e. mortal, steps. The expression *primoribus annis* (Pun. 1.511) possibly refers to Hercules’ destruction of Troy. In response to Laomedon’s refusal to pay him the agreed compensation for saving Hesione (Laomedon’s daughter) from Poseidon’s sea-monster, Hercules gathers an army of volunteers, lays siege, and takes Laomedon’s city.¹⁶ Hannibal, in other words, invokes (Greek) Heracles, addressing him with the epithet *Alcides* (511), for according to his mortal lineage Hercules is the grandson of Alceus, father of the hero’s putative father Amphitryon.¹⁷ The Trojan ancestry of the Romans and Hercules’ revenge against Laomedon explicate Hannibal’s apparent misunderstanding of Hercules as his own supporter and enemy of the Romans. Hercules destroys Troy in return for Laomedon’s ingratitude; since both Romans (via Aeneas) and Saguntines (via Zacynthos)¹⁸ descend from the Trojans, Hannibal may hope for Hercules’ help in destroying Saguntum—Rome’s ally—and finally Rome herself.

¹⁵ See Ruperti (1795–98) 1:72: *Hannibal, per ludibrium eiusdem Herculis auxilium implorans, sui se comparare solebat* (“Hannibal through mockery asking for Hercules’ help, he used to compare himself to the god”). Cf. Liv. 21.41.7 *Hannibal... aemulus itinerum Herculis, ut ipse fert* (“Hannibal... rival of Hercules’s trips, as he himself claims”). These are the words of Publius Cornelius, father of Scipio Africanus, haranguing the troops before the battle at the Trebia in 218 BC.

¹⁶ Cf. *Il.* 5.648–51; Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.5.9–10. The sources on Hercules’ war against Troy can be found in Grimal (1951) 196.

¹⁷ As in Virg. *Aen.* 10.461, where Pallas prays to Hercules addressing him as *Alcides*, the epithet is given prominence by the slow rhythm of the molossus.

¹⁸ Feeney (1982) 157.

Naturally, in hindsight, Hannibal ultimately does not conquer Rome. In fact, in the etymological *aition* of Saguntum (*Pun.* 1.273–93),¹⁹ by presenting the city as sacred to Hercules, Silius has already given his readers a narrative sign of Hannibal's guilt: for when Hannibal invokes Hercules to help him exterminate the Roman progeny of the Trojan race, he disregards (or deliberately neglects) etymological aetiology. Hannibal's hubris is thus not only religiously blasphemous but deliberately misinformed.

Furthermore, Hannibal's prayer to Hercules also echoes the Carthaginian's oath of eternal hatred against Rome earlier in *Punica* 1, since in that oath the Herculean motif of the crossing of the Alps is first introduced. In his portrayal of Hannibal, Silius particularly focuses on the darkest aspects of his *improba uirtus* (1.58)²⁰ and illustrates the Carthaginian's anti-Roman sentiment with an episode from his boyhood (1.114–19):²¹ *non superi mihi, non Martem cohibentia pacta, / non celsae obstiterint Alpes Tarpeiaque saxa* ("the gods shall not stop me, nor the treaties barring wars, nor the lofty Alps or the Tarpeian rock," 1.116–17).²²

With his oath, a young Hannibal alludes to the crossing of the Alps but omits any mention of Hercules.²³ In the *Punica*, the link between

¹⁹ See Asso (2001).

²⁰ The oxymoron highlights the boundlessness of Hannibal's perversion; cf. von Albrecht (1964) 49–52. On the political resonance of (*im-*)*probus*, see Hellegouarc'h (1963) 285–86, 494–95.

²¹ The immediate antecedent for the scene of the oath in the *Punica* (1.81–143) is one sentence in Liv. 21.1.4. See also V. Max. 9.3.ext.3; Flor. 1.22.2; App. *Hann.* 3.10; Oros. 4.14.3; Aurel. Vict. *De uir. ill.* 42.1; cf. Hannibal's own words to Antiochus in Nep. *Han.* 2.3–6 (Liv. 35.19.3; Plb. 3.11.3–12.1). Mart. 9.43.9 adds the interesting variant of the oath taking place in the temple of Heracles, on which see Campus (2001) 428. On the scene in the *Punica*, see Küppers (1986) 73–91, as well as Ganiban (74–83) and Harrison (280–82) in this volume.

²² Even if we read *Tarpeiaque saxa* as an epexegetic metaphor for *Alpes*, the mention of the Capitoline hill clearly points to Hamilcar's ultimate hope that his son succeed in making Rome a captive of Carthage. As von Albrecht (1964) 24–25 rightly remarks, the war is yet to start, but Silius has already presented Hannibal as if standing "vor den Mauern Roms."

²³ On Hercules' crossing of the Alps, cf. *Pun.* 1.65, 117, 370, 487, 546, 589, 629; 2.313–14, 333, 353, 356; 3.92, 211, 447, 469, 478, 492, 503, 544, 563, 645; 4.4, 34, 66, 75, 407, 746, 818; 5.160, 386; 6.106, 703; 8.648; 9.187, 550; 11.135, 217; 12.5, 70, 513, 696; 13.741; 15.168, 474, 504, 529, 662, 731, 818; 16.635; 17.166, 319, 502. As Tsirkin (1981) notes, Geryon and the other two Western labors, namely the Hesperides and Atlas, are conspicuously absent from the ekphrasis of the Herakleion at Gades; which should not necessarily point to the fact that Silius was consciously portraying Hannibal as a devotee of Melqart; *pace* Bassett (1966); on the ekphrasis in book 3, see Harrison (285–86) and Manolaraki (295–306) in this volume.

the crossing of the Alps and Hercules first becomes explicit in the debate at the Carthaginian senate, particularly, in Gestar's speech supporting the war in reply to Hanno warning against it:

ipse, aspice, ductor,
cum primam tenero uocem proferret ab ore,
iam bella et lituos ac flammis urere gentem
iurabat Phrygiam atque animo patria arma mouebat.
proinde polo crescant Alpes, astrisque coruscos
Apenninus agat scopulos, per saxa niuesque
(dicam etenim, ut stimulent atram uel inania mentem),
per caelum est qui pandat iter. pudet Hercule tritas
desperare uias laudemque timere secundam. (Pun. 2.349–57)

Look at commander Hannibal himself. As soon as he was able to speak words from his childish mouth, he was already promising himself to battle and war trumpet and to destroying the Phrygian race with fire, as in his mind he was leading his homeland's armies. Let the Alps soar toward the sky and the Apennines raise their gleaming peaks to the stars, for through rocks, through snow—so that, as I shall say, the emptiness triggers his darkest thoughts—through heaven itself he opens the way. It is shameful to shun the path trodden by Hercules and shirk from the challenge of duplicating his glory.

Gestar recalls Hannibal's oath and invites his audience to acknowledge the sworn exterminator of the Roman race: *flammis urere gentem/iurabat Phrygiam* (350–51).²⁴ Not only should Hannibal pursue his plans and cross the Alps, the Apennines, and even reach *apotheosis* in the sky (353–56), but he should also unflinchingly follow in Hercules' steps. Gestar's words constitute the Carthaginian senate's ratification of Hannibal's act of aggression against Saguntum.²⁵ More to the point,

²⁴ On Gestar's speech, see also Gibson in this volume. Hannibal's notorious *perfidia* did not prevent him from keeping faith to this oath, a fact acknowledged also by Roman authors (Liv. 35.19.3; Nep. *Han.* 1.3). On the origin of Hannibal's *perfidia* from his Greek education, see Brizzi (1995) 70, 72 n. 34. Brizzi speculates that Hannibal derives his spirit of sacrifice from Punic Melqart and his kingly ambitions from Greek Heracles—which is hard to prove; cf. also Breckinridge (1983).

²⁵ Hannibal's aggression to Saguntum is controversial for the historian of the Punic Wars. It allegedly constitutes a violation of the Ebro treaty (concluded by Hasdrubal in 226–25 BC; cf. Plb. 2.13.7; 3.27.9, 3.29.3, 3.30.3), which limited Carthaginian expansion on Spanish territory to the areas lying west of the river Ebro. Saguntum is actually located in the Carthaginian area of influence; Livy, however, implies that the treaty preserved the independence of Saguntum (Liv. 21.2.7). But the Carthaginians ignored the treaty because their senate had not been informed about it (Liv. 21.18.11 and Plb. 3.21.1). According to Plb. 2.13.7, the rest of Spain, and therefore also Saguntum, was never mentioned in the treaty. Coleiro (1977) 99 speculates that

however, Gestar's words authorize Hannibal to emulate Hercules and encourage him to march on. In Hannibal's oath, the Alps figure as the last obstacle on Carthage's way to conquer Rome. Similarly, Gestar's rhetoric underscores the crossing of the Alps, a Herculean deed par excellence in the *Punica*, as a necessary step in order to avoid shameful reproach: *pudet Hercule tritas/desperare vias* (356–57). Gestar's effective language makes the war appear as a necessity rather than an option.

During the siege of Saguntum, Hannibal's *rabies* and *furor* become boundless. Not only does he wish to storm the Herculean wall, but he goes so far as to kill Theron, the guardian priest of Hercules' own shrine in the city. The supernatural forces take active part in the fight: first Hercules sends the goddess Fides to inflame the spirits of the Saguntines and encourage them to resist the Punic attack; in response, Juno sends a fury that drives the Saguntines mad. Conscious of their imminent defeat, in their hellish frenzy the Saguntines make a pyre of the city's most precious possessions and burn everything to prevent the Carthaginians from gaining rich spoils. Hercules cannot prevent their destruction.

After his success, Hannibal retires in his winter quarters in New Carthage before he pays a visit to Hercules' shrine at Gades. If we take a closer look at Silius' narrative in this episode, we shall see that in the *Punica* there are not two distinct versions of Hercules, as commonly believed, either Melqart or Heracles/Hercules, according to whether the context is Punic or (Graeco-) Roman.²⁶ The notion of two distinct deities is speculative. Silius evidently associates the deity of the Ara Maxima with the one worshiped at Gades, and it makes sense to assume that Hannibal does the same.²⁷ The poet's description of this temple contains almost everything we know about it; but in spite of the paucity of data, scholars have assumed, often uncritically, that the contention between Murrus and Hannibal for Hercules' support

Hannibal's excuse in attacking Saguntum could have been the fact that Saguntum was not an Iberian foundation but a Punic colony. Coleiro's thesis is attractive but remains unconvincing, feebly based as it is on the appearance of the crescent, usually associated with Melqart, in the local Punic coinage.

²⁶ On the ekphrasis, see Gibson (2005) and Manolaraki in this volume (295–306).

²⁷ In support of Silius' treatment of Hercules as one god, see also the words of the Numidian King Syphax to Scipio at *Pun.* 16.194: *Herculeas Erythia ad litora Gades* ("Herculean Gades at the shores of Erythia"), where *Erythia* can only allude to Geryon and thereby to one of Hercules' labors, not Melqart. On the exclusion of women at both Gades and the Ara Maxima cf. Spaltenstein (1986) 179 and Augoustakis (2003a).

in Saguntum points to the fact that Hannibal and Murrus do not pray to the same god: Murrus certainly means to attract the favor of Alcmena's son, whereas Hannibal would actually worship Melqart, and his visit to Gades is the (logically flawed) proof; beginning with the effect, the cause is thus circularly demonstrated.²⁸ The question here is not whether the temple at Gades was a Punic foundation—which would bear no consequences for the interpretation of Hercules' figure in the *Punica*—but rather how Hercules functions in the poem as a paradigm of heroism for Hannibal, who is modeled as a Hellenized leader.²⁹ As mentioned above, the ekphrasis of the labors on the temple's gates points to Graeco-Roman Hercules, not to Melqart; for the ekphrasis culminates in the pyre on Mount Oeta, a detail from the Graeco-Roman saga: *inter quae fulget sacratis ignibus Oete, / ingentemque animam rapiunt ad sidera flammae* ("amidst these figures Oeta shines with sacred fires, and the flames carry the hero's soul up to the stars," 3.43–44). Furthermore, Hannibal in his prayer explicitly addresses Hercules as *Alcides* (1.511), as we have seen above:³⁰ Hannibal, a Hellenized leader,³¹ imitates Alexander the Great who claimed Hercules' support.³² Hannibal, however, may well emulate Hercules, but unlike Fabius,³³ he cannot boast Herculean blood lineage.³⁴ Although Hercules

²⁸ Cf. Bassett (1966) 266: "The Hercules of the *Punica*, at any rate, is a fusion of two Herculesees..."

²⁹ Hannibal was neither jejune of, nor immune to, Greek cultural influences. On Hannibal's Greek education, see Brizzi (1995) 67–68 n. 12; Nep. *Han.* 13.3 (= *FGrH* 176 T 1): *atque hoc Sosylo Hannibal litterarum Greearum usus est doctore* ("and he had this Sosylus as his teacher of Greek"). Hannibal's official historian Sosylus followed the leader in his campaigns and, as Diodorus informs us (Diod. Sic. 26.4 = *FGrH* 176 T 2), composed a *History of Hannibal* in seven books, of which only one papyrus fragment is extant; see Wilcken (1906) and (1907).

³⁰ As we shall see, Virtus in her speech to persuade Scipio refers to Hercules through his mortal patronymic *Amphitryoniades* (*Pun.* 15.19).

³¹ On the influence of the Hellenistic model of monarchy on Hannibal, see the bibliography listed in Brizzi (1995) 67 n. 9.

³² Breckenridge (1983) adds Hannibal to the list of Heracles' successors found in Anderson (1928) 12–31: Alexander, Romulus, Scipio, Pompey, Caesar, Antony, and Augustus. On the (Stoic) polemic about Alexander as emulator of Hercules under Nero, see Sen. *Ben.* 1.13.1–3, and Billerbeck (1986b) 3137 and n. 101.

³³ On Fabius as descendant of Hercules, see Fucecchi extensively in this volume (221–30).

³⁴ According to Campus (2001) 427, the name of Hannibal's father, Hamilcar, could have been the adaptation of either of two distinct Punic names: one meaning "Melqart is my grace" or "Grace of Melqart"; the other meaning "Melqart's brother" or "Melqart is my brother." It is not possible to establish whether for a Hellenized Carthaginian leader like Hannibal (or even for his father Hamilcar) the distinction

shows many, as well as conflicting, faces, there is only one Hercules in the *Punica*, and the contradictions observed depend on the mythic-literary tradition that has made him into a composite figure.³⁵

2. *Hercules as a model for Scipio*

In the second half of the poem, Hercules is a model for Scipio Africanus. During the *nekylia* in book 13, Scipio learns from his mother's ghost the secret of his birth: Jupiter is his father.³⁶ By establishing Scipio as a son of the ruler of gods, Silius elevates him to the level of a hero, like Hercules before his deification. As a son of Jupiter, therefore, Scipio in this poem is like Hercules. And like Hercules himself, Scipio chooses the toils of virtue over the seductions of vice.

Before asking for supreme command in the war, young Scipio is presented by Silius in the shoes of Hercules at the crossroads between lifestyles.³⁷ Silius' version of the famous choice of Hercules at the crossroads follows quite closely Prodicus' account, in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (2.1.21–33), with a few significant changes. Xenophon's personifications are Ἀρετή (Manliness) and Κακία (Vice), to whom Silius instead opposes *Virtus* and *Voluptas*. The personification of vice has been equated with pleasure. Even though we may not be too precise about when in the time between Xenophon and Silius the shift from vice to pleasure may have taken place, it is plausible that it happened in the context of those philosophical debates where pleasure was seen as a vice. Furthermore, in Xenophon Prodicus himself talks about Κακία as if to describe a personified Ἡδονή (Pleasure). Since Cynics and Stoics are the most critical about pleasure, it is reasonable to

between Tyrian Melqart and Graeco-Roman Heracles/Hercules had any religious, political, and therefore propagandistic signification. Silius' ignorance or deliberate neglect of the alleged meaning of the name Hamilcar in Punic is in favor of our 'unitarian' interpretation of Silius' Hercules as Graeco-Roman Hercules, who is nevertheless enriched with disparate elements, including those characteristic of Tyrian Melqart.

³⁵ On Hercules in tragedy and Greek myth, see Silk (1985); on Hercules as a god in epic, see Feeney (1986b), and Feeney (1991) 95–98 (Apollonius); 156–62 (Virgil); 206–7 (Ovid); 323–24 (Valerius Flaccus).

³⁶ On the *nekylia* episode and its antecedents, see Klaassen in this volume (113–26).

³⁷ Cf. Hes. *Op.* 287–92. For a wide-ranging list of quotations and imitations in later literature, as well as a parallel in Norse texts, see the apparatus and commentary in West (1978). For a history of the theme, see Alpers (1912) 4–9 and *passim*.

assume that Silius derives the story from this very type of philosophical sources, which must have been popular in the rhetorical schools.³⁸

In her speech counterbalancing Voluptas' shrewd rhetoric, one of Virtus' main arguments points out Hercules' achievements:

at quis aetherii seruantur seminis ortus,
caeli porta patet. referam quid cuncta domantem
Amphitryoniaden? (Pun. 15.77–79)

But heaven's gate lies open for those who have preserved their inborn divine element. Shall I mention Amphitryon's son, who conquered everything?

Virtus refers to Hercules by his mortal patronymic *Amphitryoniades*, from his mortal father Amphitryon, Alcmene's husband, and thus she implicitly emphasizes the human nature of Hercules despite his extraordinary qualities that allowed him to conquer all evils. Scipio, like Hercules, is the product an *aetherius partus* (13.629 ~ 15.77) and therefore the *caeli porta* will open for him, should he pursue the 'virtuous' path.³⁹

3. Silius' Hercules as a paradigm of human divinity

As Billerbeck has shown, Silius' Hercules is not single-faced. In studying Hercules as a model for Hannibal, I have emphasized both the unity of Hercules as a character in the *Punica* and the multifarious provenance of the elements Silius conflates in creating his Hercules as a paradigm of heroism in the poem.⁴⁰ Silius preserves the idiosyncrasies of the archaic Greek hero, especially in his aetiological tales. For instance, in the story of Pyrene (3.420–41), the princess seduced and impregnated by Hercules on the Pyrenees, the poet casts the hero in

³⁸ Cf. Alpers (1912) 31–34 and *passim*, from whose attention on the moralistic usage of the apologue, one could deduce that it must have appealed to the rhetorical schools, but I have not been able to find explicit references with the possible exception of Quint. *Inst.* 9.2.36 (mentioned by Alpers [1912] 32). For the Stoic/Cynic use of Hercules' example, and for the interesting hypothesis of a Ciceronian model for Silius' treatment, see Heck (1970) with the perceptive comments of Billerbeck (1986a) 345 and n. 25 and (1986b) 3132–33 ns. 83–84 and 3138–39.

³⁹ See also Bernstein in this volume (386–89).

⁴⁰ For the various ways in which Hercules is presented in the *Punica*, see the economic treatment of Billerbeck (1986b) 3140–41.

a comic mode as an insatiable eater, intemperate drunkard, and philanderer, familiar from the Athenian stage.⁴¹

In the *Punica*, therefore, Silius fashions Hercules as a complex figure. While the 'tragic' Hercules, who dies on Mount Oeta, prominently figures, for instance, in the ekphrasis of the temple in Gades (3.43–44), the comic aspects of the demigod are chiefly visible in Silius' erudite excursions in the Hellenistic mode. During the Hellenistic age, Hercules' earthly adventures in ridding the world of its monsters were canonized in twelve labors and were enriched with a series of parerga that emphasize the hero's mortal/human nature. The rewards of immortality and *apotheosis* awaited Hercules at the end of his toils.

The idea of deification as a reward for services done to mankind is deeply engrained in Hellenistic philosophy, especially in Stoic thought. As Billerbeck puts it, "wie Dionysos und die Dioskuren wird er für die den Menschen erwiesenen Dienste mit Unsterblichkeit belohnt, ein Gedanke, den der römische Stoizismus über das Beispiel des Romulus hinaus allgemein auf die großen Männer Roms übertragen hat."⁴² As the critic submits, Hercules' weeping for the Saguntines or his seduction of defenseless girls is "gänzlich unphilosophisch."⁴³ I disagree, however, with Billerbeck's explanation that Hercules' unphilosophical demeanor in the poem, as well as his unsuccessful fighting at Cannae (*Pun.* 9.292–93), is easily understandable within the context of the mythological tradition of Juno's opposition to Hercules on the one hand, and on the other in terms of the dramatic economy of the poem.⁴⁴ There is, I argue, a strong human component in the depiction of the god Hercules in Silius.

For the Romans Hercules was chiefly a Roman god. Greek stories about Heracles deeply influenced literary portrayals of Hercules,

⁴¹ Naughty Hercules is already a cliché in the famous scene from Aristophanes' *Frogs*, where the servant, deceived by Xanthias' disguise, has mistaken him for Heracles (*Ar. Ra.* 503–33). On the fluidity of the Heracles themes in tragedy, satyr-drama, and comedy, see Kirkpatrick and Dunn (2002) 40–41, 55. For Hercules as drunkard, see e.g. *Macr.* 5.21.16. On Pyrene see Asso (2001) and Augoustakis (2003a), whose opinion on the distinction between Hercules' positive and negative characters, with the predictable result that Silius would have Hannibal imitate the latter and Scipio the former, I do not entirely share. Ripoll (1998a) 112–32 explains the contradiction in Hercules' portrayal by means of the evolution of the hero in the poem from (Greek) weakling hero to adult (Roman) Stoic, which I consider an oversimplification.

⁴² Billerbeck (1986b) 3132; cf. Billerbeck (1986a) 346.

⁴³ Billerbeck (1986b) 3140.

⁴⁴ Billerbeck (1986b) 3141.

making it impossible by Silius' time to distinguish between a Greek and a Roman god. In the case of Silius' aetiological narratives (Pyrene and the Fabian *gens*), the drunk Heracles, the seducer, is familiar from Attic, as well as Plautine, comedy. And the weeping figure, praying to Fides, possibly owes much to tragic depictions of the god. The 'dramatic economy' of the poem certainly plays a role in the representation of Hercules. And yet, the Roman appearances of Hercules on the theatrical stage, e.g., in Senecan drama, I would argue, may have paradoxically contributed to the de-Stoicization of Hercules.

Billerbeck concludes that:

Silius' Stoicizing portrayals of his Roman heroes was not an abstract concept of the *sapiens* as he is presented in Lucan's idealized Cato and prefigured in the Herakles of the Cynics, but rather the Ciceronian ideal of the *uir bonus* described in the *De Officiis*. This is particularly obvious in the case of Scipio... In short, Stoicism in Flavian epic is more a reflection of literary tradition and conventional Roman attitudes than a part of a conscious philosophical programme.⁴⁵

Billerbeck's concern in assessing the literariness of the Stoic idealization of Hercules in the *Punica* is perceptive. It is not clear, however, to what she refers by "conventional Roman attitudes." Literary conventions? In Silius, Hercules weeps the only time he speaks and loses in battle the only time he fights. Ideally, an exemplary model for Roman men, whether drawn from philosophical or literary traditions, would encourage Romans to endure sorrow and repress tears and to win rather than lose battles. But Hercules' unphilosophical weaknesses, I argue, succeed in picturing the Roman god in human form, and thus contribute to his role in the poem as a paradigm of heroism for Roman men—an archetype, as it were, of human divinity.

⁴⁵ Billerbeck (1986a) 353.

CHAPTER NINE

VIRTUE AND NARRATIVE IN SILIUS ITALICUS' *PUNICA*

Ben Tipping

1. *Plot and protagonist*

Prima facie, the *Punica* affords a prime example to the (neo-)Aristotelean argument that plot, not protagonism, determined the composition of ancient epic.¹ Silius imitates his epic predecessor, Lucan, in omitting to promote any single persona to narratological and ethical pre-eminence.² Yet even in the *De bello civili* and the *Punica*, character is conduit for plot. In the latter, it is through the decisions and actions of exemplary individuals that Silius portrays the epic struggle of Roman virtue to win victory over Carthaginian vice.

Hannibal underpins and spans the *Punica*, but as military and moral enemy of Rome. Hercules and Regulus are embedded exemplars of monstrosity, gigantism, and Silius' informing philosophy, Stoicism, but confined to excursus and catalogue. Among the Romans on active service in Silius' main narrative, Fabius Maximus Cunctator has the longest association with the Second Punic War and teaches Rome the key lesson of discipline.³ It is also Fabius whom, at the climactic close of *Punica* 10, Silius associates with the moral high-ground Romans have lost since the collapse of Carthage. Intertextually, Fabius recalls his Livian counterpart and, particularly, the patience and synecdochic status of Virgil's Aeneas.⁴

Fabius' exemplary caution, control, and civic leadership render him Hannibal's ethical opposite, yet it may be that he is ultimately too restrained and restrictive to secure greater success for his country than

¹ See Feeney (1986b).

² Marks (2005a) 61–67 provides an overview of responses to this problem. On the close intertextual relationship between the two poets, see Marks' article in this volume (127–53).

³ Burck (1979) 283–84.

⁴ On the “synecdochic” epic hero, the one man who represents many, see Hardie (1993a) especially 3–11, 27–35, and 49–56. On Fabius in detail, see Fuccechi in this volume (221–30).

a stalemate.⁵ Both *mythos* and *ethos*, moreover, promote Scipio Africanus Maior's claim to be the true hero of the *Punica*. While Hannibal's progress towards Rome provides thematic cohesion in books 1–12, books 13–17 constitute a sort of *Scipiad*.⁶ With his opening word, *ordior* (“I begin,” *Pun.* 1.1),⁷ Silius connotes the status of the subsequent exordium as epitome of the *Punica* as a whole. In the exordium that follows, he predicts Scipio's predominance at the end of the *Punica*. Of the multiple *uiri* in 1.5, Silius focuses on a single *Dardanus duxor* (“Dardan leader”), Scipio, in 1.14–15, and there adumbrates Scipio's role in Rome's future: “a Dardan leader opened up the Carthaginian citadel” (*reserauit Dardanus arces/duxor Agenoreas*). That prolepsis is echoed as its fulfillment is announced in the final book of the *Punica* (17.618–19): “immediately the citadel opened up to the Dardan leader of its own accord” (*reserantur protinus arces/Ausonio iam sponte duci*).⁸ Scipio re-embodies the lion's share of those qualities that Silius' characters inherit piecemeal from Virgil's Aeneas.⁹ He is the most conspicuous exemplar of Roman virtue in the *Punica* and, if less conspicuously, a proto-*princeps*.¹⁰ Whereas Hannibal's would-be Herculeanism is misinformed by an ethic of unconstrained competition and proves vulnerable to Capuan luxury, Silius' final focus at 17.649–50 on a Herculean Scipio lends the latter both narratological and ethical supremacy.¹¹

It is, however, yet another Roman general, M. Claudius Marcellus who, in *Punica* 12, first shows Silius' Hannibal susceptible to aggressive opposition. In so doing, he heralds the Scipionic dynamism to come in *Punica* 13–17; but he also interrupts that *Scipiad* with the mini-epic of *Punica* 14, at the close of which his tears over what the fall of Syracuse may signify for Rome are both reminder of Fabius' exemplary caution and premonition of another Scipio Africanus' angst at the collapse of Carthage, post-*Punica*, in 146 BC. It remains possible not only to insist on the narratological dominance of Hannibal in the *Punica*, but also,

⁵ See Kißel (1979) 58–68 and 153–60; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2523–31; Hardie (1993a) 9; Marks (2005a) 21–27.

⁶ See Burck (1979) 260–70; Delarue (1992) 160–65; Hardie (1993a) 97; Marks (2005a) 76–77.

⁷ Translations are my own.

⁸ See Marks (2005a) 67–77.

⁹ See von Albrecht (1964) 177–80. On Scipio as Aeneas and Odysseus, see Klaassen extensively in this volume (113–26).

¹⁰ See Borzsák (1982); Fucecchi (1993); Ripoll (1998a) 351–55; Vinchesi (2001) 14–16; Marks (2005a) *passim*. On Hercules in the poem, see Asso in this volume (179–92).

¹¹ See Kißel (1979) 88–95 and 128–53.

as I shall argue in this essay, to identify ethical shortcomings in Scipio. We may regard the latter as exemplar of tension between individualism and subjection to the state, a tension of which the historical Scipio was particularly, indeed primarily, representative. The Silian Scipio's pursuit of personal fame may not only diminish his apparent difference from Hannibal, but also associate him problematically with autocracy and tyranny.¹²

2. *Rise and fall*

At *Punica* 17.626, the name Africanus marks the fame that was Scipio's reward for personal success in the Second Punic War. In public and private texts, including historiography and philosophy, Romans observe and contribute to the idealization of the pursuit and attainment of glory.¹³ All societies face the consequent problem of how to contain and control the powerful individual, but especially those as fiercely competitive as ancient Rome. While the aristocracy of the middle republic may have moderated the pursuit of individual power and glory, Scipio Africanus illustrates the threat that powerful oligarchs posed to status quo. Tradition transmitted an ethic of competition that led both to the explosive growth of the Roman empire and also to the implosion of civil war. Indeed, the endurance of the Roman republic is perhaps a rather more surprising phenomenon than its eventual fall. Civil conflict called into question the very possibility of exemplary Roman conduct, a fact that Lucan brilliantly and brutally exploits in his *De bello civili*. Silius opens the *Punica* with a quite un-Lucanian promise to tell of "the arms by which the renown of the descendants of Aeneas raised itself to heaven" (*arma, quibus caelo se gloria tollit/Aeneadum*, 1.1–2). To the metapoetry of *explorant aduersa uiros* ("adverse circumstances put men to the test," 4.603), moreover, he juxtaposes, at 4.603–4, the claim that "by a hard incline, through difficulties excellence strives unafraid to acclaim" (*perque aspera duro/nititur ad laudem uirtus interrita cliuo*). With those verses, Silius introduces to his narrative Fibrenus who, we learn, cannot endure a death without honor and

¹² For a similar approach to the shortcomings of Scipio, especially because of his textual association with female lament, see Dietrich (2005).

¹³ Leeman (1949) is a seminal discussion of *gloria* in ancient Rome. See also e.g., Philipp (1955); Earl (1967) 35; Harris (1979) 20–30.

renown (4.605–6), and upon whom Silius bestows just the fame that he desires.

Fibrenus' wish to win renown makes him a typical exemplar of heroism in the *Punica*, whose heroes and anti-heroes characteristically pursue glory, particularly in death.¹⁴ When, at *Punica* 15.69–89, Virtus accuses Voluptas of tempting Scipio to a life of obscurity and asserts that man is blessed with a divine mind, upward-looking, and born for glory, she evokes Silius' own programmatic, metapoetic, and apparently positive evaluations of glory.¹⁵ Yet Scipio's pursuit of personal glory in the *Punica* is, as we shall see, a potentially problematic aspect of his exemplary heroism.

Although Silius indicates the sequence of victory over Carthage, moral decline, and civil war that other authors identify,¹⁶ the relationship he plots between those aspects of Roman history is not easy to establish. At *Punica* 2.489–503, Fides tells Hercules that she has left the earth, but, at 6.547–48, Marus implies that she retains a terrestrial seat at the time of the Second Punic War. Immediately afterwards, he more than hints at a coming decline among Romans who will fail to follow Regulus' example of endurance (6.549–50). Serranus' response to Marus' story of how Regulus fought the serpent of the Bagrada is to regret the lack of such a Regulus to fight the battles of the Second Punic War (6.296–98).¹⁷ In his theodicic version of Roman history at *Punica* 3.571–629, Jupiter presents the current conflict as one that will reaccustom to hardship Romans who are failing to live up to the example of glorious endurance set by their ancestors, promising the ennobling efforts of Paulus, Fabius, and Marcellus, and the final victory of Scipio (3.575–92). Yet Silius has already painted a different picture of Romans at the time of the Second Punic War in his description of the Roman senate (1.609–29). Emphasis there on the retention of Roman moral and military tradition renders rather surprising Jupiter's castigation of mollescence and intention to toughen.¹⁸ Surprising also is his contrasting silence on the subject of those civil wars whence the Julian

¹⁴ See Wilson (1993) 226–27.

¹⁵ Virtus again recalls the claim of *Pun.* 4.603–4 at 15.101–16, where she describes the way to her abode. See also Ripoll (1998a) 236–53; Marks (2005a) 156–57.

¹⁶ See e.g. Sal. *Cat.* 10.1–3; Cic. *Fin.* 5.24.70; Cic. *Phil.* 1.11; Liv. *Praef.* 12, 21.1.1–2, and 22.54.10–11; Luc. 1.158–72; Juv. 6.290–300.

¹⁷ On Regulus' questionable heroism, see Augoustakis (2006).

¹⁸ See e.g., Feeney (1991) 306.

and Flavian dynasties arose to rule Rome.¹⁹ That silence is the more conspicuous because Jupiter condemns the degeneracy that, at *De bello civili* 1.158–82, Lucan cites as a cause of Roman strife, and because Silius' Sibyl recalls, at *Punica* 13.850–67, the Virgilian reference to civil war at *Aeneid* 6.826–35 that Lucan expands into a whole epic.

Collapse into the specific vice of civil war looms unavoidably over Silius' poem as epic prequel. Lucanian motifs in the focal account of Cannae not only foreshadow civil war in the first centuries BC and AD but also indicate imperfections in republican Rome at its greatest. Silius frames that episode, furthermore, with intrusive challenges to any Virgilian vision of defeat overcoming victory.²⁰ At *Punica* 9.346–53, he warns Romans that they will bear future prosperity less well than adversity, and indicates that they would not be able to withstand further testing.²¹ He then tells Rome that the wounds of defeat will bring everlasting glory, that Rome will never be greater at any other time, and that it will so sink in prosperity that only the renown of its defeats will preserve its name. In the final two verses of *Punica* 10, he asserts: "Such was Rome then. If it was destined to change its character after your fall, Carthage, would that you survived" (*haec tum Roma fuit. post te cui uertere mores / si stabat fatis, potius, Carthago, maneres*, 10.657–58). While Silius does not clearly define at 9.346–53 or 10.657–58 the precise moment in Roman history at which the removal of a Carthaginian threat caused decline to set in, and while in the latter passage he may primarily indicate that Rome declined after the Third Punic War, he also identifies the central battle of the *Punica*, Cannae, as both military nadir and moral zenith, so casting a narratological and ethical shadow over subsequent Roman success.²²

¹⁹ See McGuire (1997) 79–80; Marks (2005a) 214–15.

²⁰ See e.g., Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2501–4.

²¹ If the vocative *Romane* ("Roman") in *Pun.* 9.346 recalls that in Virg. *Aen.* 6.851 and the prescription for Roman conduct that Anchises' ghost provides at Virg. *Aen.* 6.851–53, Silius here implies that, robbed of an external enemy to "war down" (*debellare*), Romans have forgotten how to be Roman.

²² See e.g., Cic. *Off.* 3.47, where Cicero remarks that at the time of the disaster of Cannae, Rome contained men of greater spirit than ever before in times of success. At Cic. *Off.* 3.114, recalling Plb. 6.58.2, Cicero says that Roman refusal to ransom hostages held by Hannibal broke Hannibal's spirit because the senate and people had shown such a lofty spirit in time of adversity. On Silius' dating of Roman moral decline in his treatment of the battle of Cannae and elsewhere in the *Punica*, see Kißel (1979) 43 and 142 n. 140; McGuire (1985) 11–26 and 187; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2505–6 and 2510; Spaltenstein (1990) 102; Laudizi (1989) 137 and 154; McGuire (1995) 118; Fowler (1997a) 22–23; McGuire (1997) 57 and 141–42; Ripoll

It is not least through multiple echoes of Lucan's *De bello ciuili*, in which repetition is thematic, that Silius evokes a sense of reprise in the *nekyia* (underworld-episode) of *Punica* 13.381–893. At 13.850–67, the Sibyl signals that the post-Scipionic future will foist on Rome such leaders as Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar, whose inability to play civilians rather than soldiers destroyed the republic.²³ Those four figures, who in this *nekyia* represent an undesirable but inexorable fate, may bring to mind the funereal coloring with which Marcellus' ghost closes Virgil's *Heldenschau* in *Aeneid* 6, but they have a more powerful intertext in the portrayal of Rome inevitably riven by civil war that is Lucan's *De bello ciuili* as a whole. The Sibyl's representation at *Punica* 13.864–65 of civil war as global conflict recalls *Aeneid* 6.834, where Anchises' ghost characterizes civil conflict as self-mutilation, but, again, more closely echoes *De bello ciuili* 10.456.²⁴ With her exclamatory *quotiens* ("how often") at *Punica* 13.866, Silius' Sibyl recalls the horrific sense of repetition on which Lucan plays in his version of the civil war. While foreshadowing of that conflict in the *Punica* also involves play on the idea of repetition,²⁵ for Silius' contemporary audience the exclamation *quotiens* may well have had a further resonance inasmuch as the ugly spectacle of civil war had re-entered the arena of Roman history since Lucan composed his account of Roman strife.

During Scipio's encounter with Virtus and Voluptas at *Punica* 15.18–128, the former cites Rome as an example of what commitment to *uirtus* (or Virtus) can achieve (15.89–92). The collapse of other cities through submission to Voluptas and the attendant Luxus (Luxury) then becomes an admonitory example for the Roman Scipio and a subtle suggestion to the audience of the *Punica* that Rome has, regrettably, succumbed to Voluptas (15.92–97). Voluptas, whom Scipio has rejected in favor of Virtus, asserts without any subtlety that she will

(1998a) 525–26; Fucecchi (1999) 339; Pomeroy (2000) 154 and 165 n. 31; Cowan (2002) 51 and 107; Tipping (2004) 345–70; Marks (2005a) 252–56; Dominik (2006) 114–17; and Cowan in this volume (346).

²³ See Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2523–31.

²⁴ On these parallels, see Reitz (1982) 127–29. Lucan also programmatically portrays civil war as mad self-mutilation, at 1.3.

²⁵ Note e.g., references to civil war at *Pun.* 3.359 and 3.400. "And Munda, destined to bring forth Emathian suffering for Italians" (*et Munda, Emathios Italis paritura labores*) in the latter verse effectively confounds the defeat of Pompey's sons at Munda with that of their father at Pharsalus. See also e.g., Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2518–19; Laudizi (1989) 110; McGuire (1997) 84.

have her day at Rome (15.125–27). And we already know from Virtus' words at 15.96–97 that Voluptas will bring Luxus.

3. *Republic and empire*

At *Punica* 3.590–629, Jupiter caps the defeated or defensive Roman leaders of the Second Punic War with the victorious Scipio and, ultimately, the comparable but transcendent Domitian. Fabius' caution will eventually yield to Scipio's dynamism, and Fabius' protégé Paulus will fall at Cannae. Marcellus, though approximately Scipionic, will also meet with death on the battlefield and leave Scipio the last great Roman leader standing. Scipio himself, by contrast, will achieve unscathed success in the offensive. Jupiter caps the heroes of the Second Punic War with the successfully active and victorious Scipio, and attends ultimately to the comparable but transcendent Domitian. Yet evaluation in the *Punica* of proactive militarism is not unequivocal. At 3.575–92, as noted earlier, Jupiter contrasts the patient excellence of Fabius, Paulus, and Marcellus with the degeneracy of their descendants. At 4.476–77, Mars maintains that Scipio will never morally surpass his ephebic act of *pietas*. At 6.545–46, Marus asserts that Regulus' "endurance outdoes all triumphs" (*patientia/cunctos...superat currens*). At 17.7, at the beginning of the book that will end with Scipio's triumph, Silius commends the outstanding moral probity of Scipio's cousin Nasica with the comment: "that reputation was greater and better than triumphs" (*en nomen melius maiusque triumphis*). By rendering military disaster at Cannae both narratological turning-point in the *Punica* and moral peak for Rome, Silius also intimates that subsequent successful heroes and emperors to whom they may be parallel are part of a decline. In *Punica* 12, Marcellus' victory at Nola offers Rome the first sign that the enemy can be beaten rather than merely evaded, and Hannibal is repelled from Rome.²⁶ From that book onwards, as dynamic leaders emerge to further Rome's cause, the question arises of whether Roman mores, exemplary in defeat, will survive victory.²⁷

²⁶ Cf. Cic. *Brut.* 12; Liv. 23.16.16; V. Max. 4.1.7 with Burck (1984a) 17 n. 53. On the Silian Marcellus' success at Nola, see also Burck (1984a) 11–12; Tipping (2004); Marks (2005a) 29 and 74–75; and Fucecchi in this volume (230–28).

²⁷ See Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2536; McGuire (1997) 83.

It is Scipio through whom Jupiter connects the heroes of the Second Punic War and Silius' contemporary Romans. Scipio's martial valor is in harmony with the emulative virtues of the Flavii, a warrior-race fated to outdo the Iulii and productive of Domitian, himself destined to surpass the military achievements of his father and brother.²⁸ The title Germanicus with which Domitian is addressed in 3.607 itself prompts comparison and association with Scipio, whose acceptance of the title Africanus began, Livy tells us (30.45.6), the trend for celebrating victorious commanders with the name of the conquered people.²⁹ Silius concludes his poem with Scipio's triumph. At *Punica* 3.614–15, Jupiter predicts Domitian's multiple and surpassing triumphs.³⁰ Scipio is compared to Liber at 17.647–48. Jupiter predicts that Domitian will outdo Bacchus in military conquests at 3.615. Virtus associates Scipio in *biuio* with world-conquering, heaven-bound Bacchus at 15.79–81. And at 17.647–48 Silius compares Scipio to Bacchus in triumph. We learn at 3.594–96 that *uirtus caelestis* ("heavenly excellence"), embodied in the Flavian family, will ascend to the stars. Such virtue might equally and perhaps more obviously be attributed to Scipio. His apocryphal descent from Jupiter becomes an insistent reality in the *Punica*,³¹ while his *uirtus*, it is strongly implied,³² will win him a place in heaven, as it already had by the time he appeared in Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*. Of the Flavii, it is again Domitian upon whose divine descent and surpassing catasterism Jupiter's predictive panegyric finally focuses. At *Punica* 3.625, Jupiter calls Domitian the son of gods. In the final verses of the poem, Silius similarly affirms that Jupiter is Scipio's father. At 3.627–28, Jupiter promises that Quirinus himself will cede his throne

²⁸ On Domitian in this passage, see e.g., Bickel (1911) 501–9; Wistrand (1956) 5–30; McDermott and Orentzel (1977) especially 27–32; Spaltenstein (1986) 249; Laudizi (1989) 35–46 and 155; Mezzanotte (1995) 370–72; McGuire (1997) 1–11; Marks (2005a) 211–17 and 245–52.

²⁹ Livy (30.45.7) adds that such celebration continues in the case of victories altogether unequal to Scipio's.

³⁰ On Domitian as *triumphator*, see Jones (1992) 152–53. On evocation of Domitianic triumph in the *Punica*, other poetry, and art, see also Taisne (1973); Mezzanotte (1995) 378–81; Marks (2005a) 236–37. On points of comparison between Jupiter's predictions regarding Domitian and Silius' final description of the triumphant Scipio, see e.g., Wistrand (1956) 9–19; Marks (2005a) 218–19.

³¹ See Sil. *Pun.* 4.476, 7.487–88, 13.615–49, and 17.653–54. On Scipio's paternity in the *Punica*, see e.g., Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2543–51; Laudizi (1989) 126 and 136–40; Marks (2005a) 187–206; Bernstein (2008) 150–56 and in this volume (386–89).

³² See Sil. *Pun.* 15.77–78. Cf. 17.645–54.

on Domitian's arrival in heaven. Silius places Scipio's glory on a par with Quirinus' at 17.651.

Raymond Marks argues extensively that Silius' regal Scipio is both parallel and positive paradigm for the emperor Domitian.³³ Among possible affinities are those between Scipio's and Domitian's familial *pietas*, or between Scipio's association with sexual continence and Domitian's moral reform.³⁴ Yet Domitian's regime may be regarded not only as one of Flavian reaction against Neronian excess and depravity, but also as one of extravagant consumption and its political correlative, tyrannical power. Portrayals of Domitian in such ancient sources as Pliny's *Panegyricus* or Juvenal *Satire* 4 constitute denigration in contrast to his successors,³⁵ yet arguably reflect, if in a glass that distorts and enlarges, views of the emperor held during his reign. Even a recent apologist does not deny Domitian's manifest despotism.³⁶

Despite such ambiguity as we have so far considered, Silius ostensibly portrays in his epic of Rome at the height of the republic a period when Roman virtue came perforce to the fore and achieved genuine victory in a genuine conflict. Domitian's own military campaigns may well have looked like mere, and only more or less successful, glory-seeking in contrast to such virtuous victory, while the description of his reign at Juvenal *Satire* 4.151 as "a time of savagery" (*tempora saevitiae*), and at Tacitus *Agricola* 1.4 as "a time savage and hostile to excellence" (*saeva et infesta uirtutibus tempora*), identify it as an era of tyranny under which virtue was not promoted, as it was by (Silius') Second Punic War, but opposed. At *Satire* 4.37–38, Juvenal introduces Domitian as tearing into a half-dead world and as a bald Nero to whom Rome was enslaved. It was clearly possible to make an association between Domitian and Nero, *dominus* (master) contemporaneously with the career of Lucan, in whose *De bello civili* the advent of imperial autocracy at Rome is a key theme. Indeed, Silius adumbrates Domitian in his own specifically post-Lucanian picture of civil war and future one-man mastery at Rome.

At *Punica* 13.844–50, immediately before she points out the pairs of Marius and Sulla and Pompey and Caesar, the Sibyl indicates a Vestal Virgin, punished for unchastity. It is possible, if not probable, that

³³ Marks (2005a) 209–88.

³⁴ See e.g., Mezzanotte (1995), especially 363–70; Marks (2005a) 237–42.

³⁵ See e.g., Ramage (1989); Jones (1992) 160.

³⁶ See Jones (1992).

Silius' contemporary audience would have thought there of Cornelia, senior Vestal Virgin, whom Domitian condemned to be buried alive for just such a crime.³⁷ The power-hungry pairs that follow, and associated talk of political domination and of the *deum gens* ("divine family"), may well, however, have prompted thought of the mastery and divinity that the emperor expressed, according to Suetonius *Domitian* 13.2, in his self-appointed title *dominus et deus* ("master and god").³⁸ Consciousness of Domitian in the context of the punishment of the unchaste Vestal Virgin would, in fact, make it more likely to be present in the immediately subsequent meeting with the faces of Roman mastery. The probable allusion to Cornelia at 13.844–50 may present Domitian as enforcer by example of moral authority and implicitly praise his punishment of the crime against Romanity constituted by the unchastity of a Vestal Virgin. But he is here himself connected with the far worse crime of despotism, figured through competing, Lucanesque opponents.

Silius' Domitian at least to some extent exemplifies the imperial domination of Rome that rouses Lucan's epic indignation. With the expression *deum gens* in *Punica* 13.862, Silius' Sibyl associates not only Domitian, *dominus et deus*, but also Scipio, with unending autocracy at Rome. We might well also think of Scipio in connection with Domitian at 3.625, when Jupiter, repeatedly identified in the *Punica* as Scipio's parent, attributes divine family to Domitian. At 13.628–47, the ghost of Scipio's mother, Pomponia, emphatically reminds her son of his divine ancestry.³⁹ The occurrence of *deum gens* in 13.862 might, then, make us think of both Scipio and Domitian, whom Jupiter addresses

³⁷ Reitz (1982) 124 n. 4 compares Mart. 6.4.5 and Stat. *Silu.* 4.1.25, but maintains that there is no sufficiently explicit reference to the contemporary episode to indicate that Silius' Sibyl is deliberately engaging in political commentary rather than merely voicing a general pessimism. Spaltenstein (1990) 276 argues that there is likely to be a reference to Cornelia here, on the grounds that the tone of indignation makes better sense if Silius is alluding to her crime and Domitian's punishment of it. As I indicate above, Silius' text could have had a specific political resonance for his contemporary audience at this point. See also e.g., Marks (2005a) 238.

³⁸ Ramage (1989) 689 notes that Juvenal's Laronia remarks ironically on the divine pretensions of the title at *Satire* 2.40. Ramage (1989) 701 further suggests that there is perhaps an allusion to Domitian's divine pretensions at Juv. 4.45–46, where the emperor is called "highest high priest" (*pontifex summus*), and a more pointed one at Juv. 4.71, in the phrase "power equal to the gods" (*dis aequa potestas*). Such pretension is also the subject of commentary at Plin. *Pan.* 2.3, 33.4, and 52.7. Martial comments on the title *dominus et deus* at 10.72.1–3. Jones (1992) 107–9 argues that we should not trust Suetonius' claim at *Dom.* 13.2, but, as McGuire (1997) 7 n. 10 contends, there is strong evidence to support it.

³⁹ On the episode, see Agoustakis (2008) 66–70.

as "son of gods" (*nate deum*) at 3.625. Domitian is, at the time of the Second Punic War, an example of one-man mastery still to come at Rome. The parallel Silius proposes between that emperor and Scipio reminds us that it is possible to read Roman history as one dominated by a succession of individuals.⁴⁰ Against the background of such a history, the emergent hero of Silius' epic republic cannot help but set an example for the emergence of the power-hungry leaders at Rome who would precipitate civil war and the downfall of the republic. Yet whatever parallel between Scipio and Domitian Silius may forge with panegyric and paradigm remains problematic, inasmuch as his audience remembers that there *ought* to be a difference between a republican hero and an emperor who could be portrayed and viewed as a *dominus*.

The *Punica* is, if less obviously than Lucan's *De bello civili* or Statius' *Thebaid*, a poem at war with itself. The past Silius portrays is at once an ideal that contrasts with subsequent decline, the source of that decline, and disconcertingly parallel with the present. For Silius also, at times, and from a certain point of view, presents exemplary Roman conduct as intact across history: Scipio and Domitian are model Romans and approximately modeled on one another. But that point of view is temporary and partial. Even if the typological parallels involved achieve a mutual heroization of past and present exemplars of Roman conduct, they also inexorably entail tensions that cannot be wholly suppressed. The affinity of the republican Scipio to extravagantly autocratic emperor papers over ideological fissures that remain, or are all too easily rendered, visible. It also raises the possibility that the emergent hero of Silius' epic is precisely an example of and for the domination of the individual over Roman destiny.

4. *Ghosts and visions*

The *nekyia* of *Punica* 13 is an important passage for Scipio's ethical formation. At 13.615–49, Scipio meets the ghost of his mother Pomponia, who, to encourage her son to reach for the stars, relates how Jupiter sired him in the form of a giant serpent. Her claim at *Punica* 13.632–33 that she has a place in Elysium equal to that of Alcmena

⁴⁰ See e.g., Henderson (1998) 318–19.

and Leda connects Scipio with Hercules, as do the two heroes' descent from Jupiter and their underworld-experience.⁴¹ Scipio's meeting with Pomponia's ghost associates him with Alexander the Great via their similar birth-legends.⁴² It also associates him with Virgil's Aeneas in the underworld (*Aeneid* 6.236–899) and with the future Octavian, himself an emulator of Hercules, Bacchus, and, by implication, Alexander, at *Aeneid* 6.791–805.⁴³ For, in her urgency at *Punica* 13.634–36, Pomponia's ghost echoes Anchises' at *Aeneid* 6.806–7. At *Aeneid* 6.791–805, Roman destiny has become the destiny of one man, Octavian. According to Silius' Sibyl at *Punica* 13.616–20, Venus engineered Scipio's conception so as to provide for Rome. It is apparent from *Punica* 16.592–94 that Scipio's Spanish campaign, while motivated by a desire for private revenge, is also public vengeance for Rome.⁴⁴ But whereas Anchises' ghost previews the Roman future as protreptic for Aeneas' suprapersonal mission, Pomponia's ghost speaks to Scipio's personal destiny of immortality and recommends unhesitating self-realization.

The ghost Scipio next encounters (*Punica* 13.650–704), that of his father, counsels a contrasting caution. The elder Scipio's ghost speaks mostly against Achillean madness, a moment of which he himself experienced at *Punica* 4.638–95. Multiple Homeric echoes in this encounter indicate the extinction of Achilles as model for the future Africanus in favor of Alexander, whose ghost immediately follows that of the elder Scipio.⁴⁵ With his opening words, however, he asserts that while virtue is its own reward, glory is sweet. If we are inclined to think that he thereby legitimates the pursuit of glory *per se*,⁴⁶ it is worth recalling that his claim also echoes Cicero *De re publica* 6.25, where, in a parallel instance of transmitting exemplary patrimony, the dream-vision of Scipio Africanus Maior tells his adoptive grandson that the way to true glory is via the seductiveness of virtue.

⁴¹ See e.g., von Albrecht (1964) 84 n. 127; Bassett (1966) 258–73; Wilson (1993) 228; Marks (2005a) 138; Augoustakis (2008) 66–70.

⁴² See Reitz (1982) 92 and 113; Fucecchi (1993) 39; Ripoll (1998b) 38 and 40; Marks (2005a) 138–39. See also Liv. 26.19.6–7; Gell. 6.1.1. For the story of Alexander's semi-divine birth from the union of Olympias and Zeus, see e.g. Arr. *An.* 4.10.2; Plut. *Alex.* 3; Gell. 13.4.

⁴³ See e.g., Norden (1899); Norden (1903) 315–16.

⁴⁴ See Marks (2005a) 93–94.

⁴⁵ See Marks (2005a) 140–42.

⁴⁶ See e.g., Reitz (1982) 94 n. 3; Billerbeck (1986b) 3135–36; Laudizi (1989) 132. Ripoll (1998a) 236–55 contends that in both this underworld-episode and the Virtus-Voluptas episode of *Punica* 15, Silius portrays desire for praise as legitimate.

At *Punica* 13.762–66, the Sibyl portrays Alexander the Great as exemplar not only of extraordinary military and political success but also of glory extending beyond his life and made concrete, so to speak, in the cities named after him. Alexander seems, then, to provide an ideal model for the would-be general and statesman, and here for the future Africanus.⁴⁷ The nomenclature *Aeneades* not only marks Scipio out as one of the *Aeneadae* whom Silius promises at *Punica* 1.1–3 to glorify, but also identifies him as the poetic descendant of Aeneas and recalls the *Aeneid* itself, particularly the *Heldenschau* that Anchises' ghost manipulates to inspire Aeneas in pursuit of glory at *Aeneid* 6.679–892. The Silian Scipio begins his address to Alexander's ghost by attributing to him glory surpassing that of all generals (13.768–69), perhaps specifically those of Virgil's parade.⁴⁸ At *Punica* 13.769–75, self-professedly driven by "a desire for success" (*cupidine rerum*),⁴⁹ Scipio is clearly possessed by a passion for fame so great that it leads him into the realm of the striking, possibly invented, metaphor, *laudum...arces* ("heights of acclaim," 13.771).⁵⁰

Alexander's response at 13.772–75 to Scipio's expressed wish to know how the former attained the pinnacle of praise establishes as the model *modus vivendi* a *modus belli gerendi*. To resolve the potential tension between Alexander's paradigmatic insistence on daring and the *protrepsis* towards caution that the elder Scipio's ghost proffers at *Punica* 13.670,⁵¹ we may regard Alexander's preference for bold military activity as affirmation of a common Roman point of view, according to which military success is a prerequisite for renown.⁵² We may also see therein appropriate critique of Fabian restraint rather than

⁴⁷ See Reitz (1982) 112. Reitz also notes that application of the term *iuuenis* ("young man") to Alexander at *Pun.* 13.762 may suggest a connection between the two, since that word has been repeatedly used of Scipio in this book (e.g. 13.427, 435, 466, 517, 623, and 696) and that Scipio's first words to Alexander are a reminder of their kinship. See Reitz (1982) 111 n. 1 and 112–13. See also Ripoll (1998b) 38 and Marks (2005a) 33 n. 53. A further point of comparison, if not a precise parallel, lies in monumentalization of the all-conquering Alexander's name in cities and memorialization of Scipio's victory over Carthage in his title, Africanus (cf. *Pun.* 17.626).

⁴⁸ See Reitz (1982) 112. Cf. Liv. 9.17–20, especially 9.17.7–17 and 9.18.8–19, where Livy maintains that Roman generals have been Alexander's equals in their deeds and glory.

⁴⁹ Reitz (1982) 113 n. 5 glosses *res* here as "successful deed," comparing Hor. *Carm.* 4.6.23.

⁵⁰ See Reitz (1982) 113 n. 4.

⁵¹ See McGuire (1985) 170.

⁵² See e.g., Harris (1979) 20–23.

promotion of the incautious haste that characterizes Silius' Flaminius, Varro, and Hannibal, and Lucan's Caesar.⁵³ Both Fabius (at e.g., *Punica* 10.594–99) and the elder Scipio (at e.g., *Punica* 15.190–91) can accept and express the need for speed, a need that does not necessarily conflict with their recommendation of caution.⁵⁴ It has been argued that Alexander commends not incaution but the Roman virtue of military *celeritas* ("swiftness"); that Silius does not here moralize about the Macedonian general; that revision of Alexander's moral status may in any case have influenced Silius' portraits not only of Alexander but also of Scipio himself; and that Silius is working within the tradition of panegyric according to which Alexander was presented as a paradigm of military excellence.⁵⁵ It has also been argued that the Alexander of Silius' *nekyia* constitutes an incomplete and temporary model for Scipio, that both he and the Scipio whom he inspires are *proficientes* not *sapientes*, and that Alexander will concede paradigmatic status to Hercules in *Punica* 15.⁵⁶ But some tensions in the Silian Scipio's encounter with Alexander's ghost remain unresolved. So, for instance, the intertextuality of *Punica* 13.763–64 with the description of Achilles at Catullus 64.340 may aptly reflect Alexander's self-promotion as an Achilles and promote Alexander's replacement of Achilles as paradigm for Scipio in the *Punica*.⁵⁷ Yet the Catullan parallel is also disruptive, since so far from presenting straightforward panegyric at 64.338–70, Catullus' Parcae associate Achilles with bloodshed, and the commemoration of his deeds with the sorrow of mothers. Silius' Alexander is, moreover, himself no mere Achilles in the Sibyl's immediately subsequent description of his conquests (*Punica* 13.764–66).⁵⁸ That description recalls the portrayal at *Aeneid* 6.791–805 of Octavian's shade as

⁵³ Fucecchi (1993) 40 notes the echo of "clever in delaying" (*sollers cunctandi*, *Pun.* 7.126) in "cleverness of cautious warfare" (*lenti sollertia Martis*, *Pun.* 13.772) and the gerundive "by daring" (*audendo*, *Pun.* 13.773). See also von Albrecht (1964) 83; Pomeroy (1989) 126; Fucecchi (1993) 47; Marks (2005a) 33–34. On Varro, see Ariemma in this volume (241–76).

⁵⁴ See e.g., Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2537; Fucecchi (1993) 40; Marks (2005a) 24–25, 30–31, 34 n. 56, and 36–37.

⁵⁵ See e.g., Kißel (1979) 178–79; Billerbeck (1986b) 3136–38; Spaltenstein (1990) 269; Laudizi (1989) 133–34 and 139 n. 158; Rocca-Serra (1990) 386–87; Fucecchi (1993) 40–42; Ripoll (1998a) 80 and 189–90; Ripoll (1998b); Marks (2005a) 32–37 and 146–47.

⁵⁶ See Fucecchi (1993) 40; Ripoll (1998b) 43–44; Marks (2005a) 147.

⁵⁷ See Marks (2005a) 143.

⁵⁸ See Marks (2005a) 143.

future world-conqueror after the fashion of Alexander.⁵⁹ At *Augustus* 18, Suetonius records a visit paid by Augustus to Alexander's mausoleum, and at *De bello ciuili* 10.20–52, apropos of Caesar's visit to that mausoleum, Lucan condemns Alexander. *Punica* 13.762–75 are specifically intertextual with *De bello ciuili* 10.20–52,⁶⁰ while the way in which Silius' Scipio first re-enacts the role of Alexander at Achilles' tomb, then encounters Alexander's ghost, recalls the Lucanian context. Alexander's status as an exemplar of conquest at this point in Silius' poem renders it difficult not to remember Lucan's explicit insistence at *De bello ciuili* 10.26–28 that the conquering Alexander is a bad example for the world and his implication that Alexander is an exemplar for Caesar's opposition to liberty. If Silius evinces no obvious sympathy here in the *Punica* with Lucan's moralizing attitude towards Alexander,⁶¹ he nonetheless effectively remind us that what positive exemplary status Alexander may have in the Virgilian passage is countered by his emphatically negative exemplary status in the *De bello ciuili*, and that the model world-conqueror is also model for undesirable world-domination. Echoes of the *Aeneid* and the *De bello ciuili* also add a dimension to a crucial moral element in the encounter between Silius' Scipio and Alexander. While the elder Scipio asserted at *Punica* 13.663–65 that virtue is its own reward, albeit one sweetened by glory, his son is here inclined to imitate Alexander as paradigm for the pursuit of renown, not the cultivation of excellence. Silius' Alexander may recall Octavian's achievements, but he is also model for the republican Scipio of precisely that drive to individual glory through martial deeds that destroyed the Roman republic.

Significant connections exist between Scipio's meeting with Alexander's ghost, his next encounter in Silius' underworld-episode, that with Homer's ghost, and his subsequent sighting of Achilles' ghost. At *Punica* 13.793–97, Scipio expresses the wish that Homer might be allowed to sing of *Romula facta* ("Roman deeds") for posterity, and remarks on Achilles' good fortune in having such a poet to commemorate his valor. Clear intertexts for the meeting with Homer portray Alexander before Achilles' tomb, pronouncing Achilles fortunate to

⁵⁹ See e.g., McGuire (1985) 172–73; Spaltenstein (1990) 269; Fucecchi (1993) 40 n. 48; Ripoll (1998b) 39–40.

⁶⁰ See Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2551–52.

⁶¹ See Marks (2005a) 147.

have a Homer to glorify his accomplishments.⁶² We may take Scipio's imitation here in the *Punica* of Alexander at Sigeum to indicate that he has fully adopted Alexander as model, and the recollection of Alexander before the tomb of Achilles, coupled with Scipio's own sighting of Achilles as a shade at *Punica* 13.800, to underline Achilles' obsolescence as role-model for Scipio.⁶³ We may also interpret Scipio's response to the shades of Homer and Achilles rather differently. At *Punica* 13.793–95, Scipio proclaims: "if fate now allowed this poet to sing of Roman deeds throughout the world, how much greater an impact, with his testimony, would those same deeds have on posterity!" (*si nunc fata darent, ut Romula facta per orbem/hic caneret uates, quanto maiora futuros/facta eadem intrarent hoc... teste nepotes!*). Scipio's pronouncement perhaps points to the potential instructive value that the monumentalization of heroic deeds in epic poetry possesses, but if *Romula facta* here denotes Roman epic achievements rather than those of any particular individual, *Romula* inevitably connotes not so much the plurality of Romans as the first Roman. The specific focus on *felix Aeacide* ("fortunate descendant of Aeacus"), furthermore, strongly suggests that Scipio is here thinking of epic poetry as a means less of transmitting Roman virtue through multiple exemplars than of glorifying the individual.⁶⁴

When, at *Punica* 13.796–97, Scipio wishes that he might have a Homeric poet—i.e., Silius—to show the world his own greatness, he again has in mind his own glory rather than that of Rome. There is a notable irony to Scipio's desire for epic renown, since Silius portrays the deeply undesirable Hieronymus, tyrant of Sicily, as inspired by the example of an Achilles "immortal in song" (*aeternus carmine Achilles*, 14.95), and the pro-Carthaginian Philip V of Macedon as proud both of his monarchical power and his descent from Achilles (*Pun.* 15.291–92). For Silius' Scipio, such heroes as Achilles and Hector whom, fittingly, he views immediately after his encounter with Homer, are perhaps merely representative of what epic poetry may do for its central characters. If, moreover, the phrase *Romula facta* in *Punica*

⁶² See e.g., Cic. *Arch.* 24; Plut. *Alex.* 14.3, 15.4–5, and 26.1; Arr. *An.* 1.12.1–2. For further discussion of Homer's ghost here in the *Punica*, see e.g., Bettini (1977) 425–47; Reitz (1982) 116; Grebe (1989) 116–18; Hardie (1993a) 115–16; McGuire (1997) 232–37; Marks (2005a) 145; Manuwald (2007) 82–87.

⁶³ See Marks (2005a) 145. See also e.g., Laudizi (1991) 12–15; Ripoll (2000b) 162 and 172.

⁶⁴ See Helzlsouer (1996) 284.

13.793 connotes the epicized deeds of the first Roman king, it may also bring to mind the fate of his less fortunate brother.

Neither Scipio's vision of Virtus and Voluptas at *Punica* 15.18–128 nor the consequent, quasi-psychomachic,⁶⁵ connection between heroism and moral choice has an obvious antecedent in the extant epic poetry of ancient Greece or Rome. Hercules is, however, doubly and emphatically paradigmatic for Silius' Scipio in this episode, because he not only provides the model for philosophical contemplation and moral choice at the crossroads but is also Virtus' first exemplar of the virtuous life.⁶⁶ Yet Hercules as slayer of monsters, whom Virtus invokes at *Punica* 15.78–79, is not so easily dissociable from his own monstrous excesses, especially since, according to Silius' own Pyrene-episode at *Punica* 3.415–41, Hercules lacked the sexual restraint Scipio renownedly possessed, raped his host's daughter, and sired a distinctly Hannibalic serpent.⁶⁷ A comparable instability attaches to Bacchus, Virtus' second exemplar of the virtuous life. The Falernus-episode of *Punica* 7.157–214 can be seen to cast the latter as the benefactor of Italy, in contradistinction from Hannibal, its invasive violator.⁶⁸ But what we learn of Bacchus at 3.101–105 potentially undermines that opposition. There, Silius portrays Bacchus not as benefactor but as conqueror, and associates him not with the blessings of wine, but with Maenadic violence and the lust of one of his satyr sons, whose horny resemblance to Bacchus Silius emphasizes. Last in Virtus' list is Romulus, whose act of fratricide might well imply, at least in post-civil-war Rome, that the impulse towards internecine strife and emergent autocracy was innately Roman.

It has been argued that in this episode, Virtus advocates a Roman, specifically Ciceronian, position, according to which glory was not merely attendant on virtue but a desirable goal per se.⁶⁹ It has also been maintained that Scipio's self-alignment with virtue is grounded in two moral imperatives of Cicero's *De re publica*, active patriotism and avoidance of *uoluptas*, and that he completes his education not as a Lucanian

⁶⁵ See von Albrecht (1964) 69–70.

⁶⁶ See e.g., Billerbeck (1986b) 3140–43; Ripoll (1998a) 125–26; Marks (2005a) 160–61.

⁶⁷ See Augoustakis (2003a).

⁶⁸ See Vessey (1972–73).

⁶⁹ See e.g., Kißel (1979) 91–92, 94 n. 17, and 151; Billerbeck (1986b) 3135–56; Matier (1990) 69; Ripoll (1998a) 238–39, 243, and 250–52; Marks (2005a) 156–57.

Stoic *sapiens* but as a Ciceronian *uir bonus*.⁷⁰ Yet the very intertextuality of Silius' Virtus-Voluptas episode with Cicero's moral philosophy raises ethical questions. In her construction of ideal humanity, Silius' Virtus claims that man, blessed with a divine mind, looks upwards. She also claims that man is born for glory. The first claim recalls and accords with the dream-vision of the elder Africanus, criticizing the younger for his fixation with earth and urging heaven-bent exercise of his divine mind at Cicero *De re publica* 6.19–25.⁷¹ The second seems therefore the more at odds with that Ciceronian dream-vision's simultaneous condemnation of earthly glory. We cannot remove the contradiction on the basis that Cicero characterizes temporal fame as a *desideratum* in the *De re publica*. Rather, the whole movement of that work is towards the contrary evaluation of earthly renown.⁷² We may be able to reduce the tension by proposing that Virtus does not here advocate pursuit of earthly renown, but claims that partially divine man is naturally and fortunately destined to attain via virtue the glory of a place in heaven.⁷³ Yet Virtus' examples of individual and civic glory exemplify a terrestrial fame, and recall the apparent advocacy of earthly acclaim in the preface of Cicero's *De re publica*, while her emphasis on the desirability of glory is not only at odds with the preference for the enticements of virtue that the Ciceronian dream-vision of Scipio Africanus Maior expresses at *De re publica* 6.25.2, but also paradoxical *per se*. There remains, then, a disconcerting inconcinnity between the Silian Virtus' version of the relationship between virtue and glory, and that of the dream-vision of Scipio Africanus Maior in the *Somnium Scipionis*. Correspondingly disconcerting is the possibility that even as he apparently commits himself to virtue, Scipio is a *protreptic* example for the pursuit of personal renown. And whatever positive *protrepsis* Scipio's moral choice may provide for future Romans is, as Voluptas warns at *Punica* 15.125, futile.

There are comparably discomfiting elements in the visionary encounter between Scipio and his father at *Punica* 15.180–99, which is a sort of scaled-down *Somnium Scipionis*. The latter's concluding recom-

⁷⁰ See e.g., Kißel (1979) 94, 151, and 159; Billerbeck (1986b) 3141 and 3145–46; Ripoll (2000b) 169–70; Marks (2005a) 159–60 with 160 n. 135.

⁷¹ Cf. Cic. *Leg.* 1.26; Cic. *N. D.* 2.56.140. See also Marks (2005a) 153.

⁷² See Zetzel (1995) 248–49.

⁷³ Heck (1970) 171 suggests that Silius' Virtus here presents acclaim not as the goal of human life but as something that one gains through exercise of reason.

mentation to pursue glory is incompatible not only with the elder Africanus' repeated injunction in Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* that the younger should shun earthly glory, but also, and more conspicuously, with the earlier pronouncement from the Silian father's ghost at *Punica* 13.663–65 regarding the relationship between virtue and glory. What the dream vision of the elder Africanus' father advises here in *Punica* 15 is dangerous inasmuch as we know that even after his father's wise words in book 13, Scipio appears to be driven by the desire for a specifically epic glory. The idea of "renown" (*fama*) earned through fighting "on the battlefield" (*acies*), to which the ghost of Scipio's father refers at *Punica* 15.199, recalls just the kind of epicized fame for which Scipio reveals a desire when he responds to the shades of Homer and his heroes in the *nekyia* of *Punica* 13.

5. *Celebrating Scipio*

Even in a summary of Scipio's achievements at *Punica* 17.625–28, his status as exemplary Roman is uncertain. The word *rector* ("guide"), with which 17.625 ends, may be an emphatic reminder of his republican role, but the lasting glory that, according to the earlier part of the same verse, he comes to possess, is equally emphatically his own. Scipio wins glory not so much as *rector* or model republican who has saved the state, as for himself. Through unprecedented attribution of the title Africanus, Scipio's name comes to encompass all the fame of the victory over Africa and Hannibal.

The associations Silius makes elsewhere in the *Punica* between the scepter and monarchy legitimate such translations of *securus sceptri* in 17.627 as "secure in his personal power" and "losing no sleep over a royal scepter."⁷⁴ So also does the etymological connection between the name Scipio, Jupiter's thunderbolt, and regal power.⁷⁵ We may take the realization within the *Punica* of the young Scipio's legendary divine origins to reach a climax as Silius attributes *fulmina* ("thunderbolts")

⁷⁴ McGuire (1997) 95–103 notes that with the four occurrences of the singular *sceptrum* in *Punica* books 1–16, Silius signifies morally reprehensible monarchy. The translations proposed above are those of McGuire (1985) 163 and Henderson (1997) 142 n. 49 respectively.

⁷⁵ On the politics of the name Scipio, see Henderson (1997) 142 n. 49.

to him at *Punica* 15.404–45 and 16.143.⁷⁶ But by the time Silius composed the *Punica*, Lucan had already produced the passage at *De bello ciuili* 1.151–57 in which he notoriously likens Caesar, exemplar of the evils of nascent autocracy, to a *fulmen*.

Marks observes that Scipio's rejection of kingship in *Punica* 16 is the basis for translation of *securus* as "without a care for," but also argues for the connotation "assured of," so that Silius here ascribes to Scipio the royal power of Jupiter's vice-regency without reprehensible desire for such power. Scipio the good king thus differs from tyrants and internecine brothers associated with the *sceptrum*.⁷⁷ That differentiation is questionable, however, especially given the predominant association of *sceptrum* with tyrannical power in the *Punica*. Scipio's duality as a king who rejects kingship and a republican *rector* who is *securus sceptri* is also unstable. When Scipio rejects kingship in the name of Rome, he exemplifies the spirit of republicanism to which all monarchy, including his own, must be anathema. When Silius commemorates his exemplary general as "unconcerned with" or "assured of" royal power or both, he may identify him as, for better or worse, a proto-autocrat. But he may also remind us that Scipio should be a model Roman republican, not a monarch or an emperor.

Closural celebration of Scipio at *Punica* 17.625–54 is final confirmation of his identity as an exemplary Roman on the model of gods and heroes. It also affirms Virtus' assertion that virtue culminates in triumph (*Punica* 15.100). Yet this apparently poised panegyric is not altogether stable. One destabilizing element is the instability of the heroic exemplars, including Hercules,⁷⁸ with whom Scipio is compared. Even within the *Punica*, the *ur-Hero* is a striking exemplar of example's lability. At *Punica* 3.32–44, Hannibal sees images of him engaged in monstrosity, cremated on Oeta, and received as a soul into heaven.⁷⁹ Later in the same book, however, he is responsible for the bestial rape of Pyrene (3.415–41). Scipio's triumphal procession to the Capitol at the end of the *Punica* is a kind of apotheosis, like that of Hercules on Mount Oeta, as Scipio gains entry to the canon of

⁷⁶ See Fuccechi (1993) 45. See also e.g., Spaltenstein (1990) 369; Marks (2005a) 192–93.

⁷⁷ See Marks (2005a) 204–5.

⁷⁸ See e.g., Galinsky (1972) 1–39; Burkert (1985) 208–11; Silk (1985); Lyne (1987) 27–35; Feeney (1991) 95–98; Hardie (1993a) 66; Morgan (1998).

⁷⁹ See Harrison's analysis of the ekphrasis in this volume (285–86).

demi-gods, exemplars of virtue's reward.⁸⁰ But Silius' final image of Hercules heading for heaven also indicates the latter's incompatibility with human society and Scipio's own liminal identity.

Imperial elements are more or less manifest and more or less problematic in Scipio's triumphal parade. At *Punica* 17.628, Silius recalls Virgil (*Aen.* 8.714–16), where the *triumphator* is Octavian, while *Punica* 17.645–54 is intertextual with praise of triumphant Octavian at *Aeneid* 6.801–5. *Punica* 17.645, the very verse in which Silius asserts Scipio's real presence, echoes *Aeneid* 8.720.⁸¹ Reference in *Punica* 17.625 to the title Africanus, which Scipio gained to commemorate his victory in Africa, and the subsequent description of his triumph, prompt thought of another emperor, Domitian, of his title Germanicus, and of his associated triumphs, which Silius' Jupiter has already mentioned at *Punica* 3.607 and 614–15, in the climax to his theodicy.⁸² In the ending that Scipio effects on the war and the *Punica*, then, is also a beginning, as Africanus anticipates Germanicus.⁸³ Silius' comparison of the triumphant Scipio to Bacchus and Hercules also evokes Domitian. Syncrisis of Scipio and Bacchus here in *Punica* 17 is intratextual with Jupiter's syncrisis of the triumphant Domitian and Bacchus at *Punica* 3.614–15, and both comparisons are intertextual with that of Octavian to Bacchus at *Aeneid* 6.804–5.⁸⁴

When, in his closural triumph, the real Scipio is lost behind a series of *imagines*, his very shape-shifting is suggestive of a parallel with the Herculean Domitian. As the emperor imposed his face on Hercules'

⁸⁰ See Bassett (1966) 273.

⁸¹ See e.g., McGuire (1997) 164; Hardie (1993a) 39; McGuire (1997) 164. On the comparability of Scipio at the end of the *Punica* to Octavian, see also e.g., Bassett (1966) 271; Borzsák (1982) 172–73; Spaltenstein (1990) 486; Laudizi (1989) 138–40; Spaltenstein (1990) 486; Mezzanotte (1995) 380–81; Ripoll (1998b) 39–40; Marks (2005a) 243. With *Sil. Pun.* 17.647–50 cf. also *Hor. Carm.* 3.3.9–16.

⁸² On the parallelism of Scipio and Domitian at the end of *Punica* 17, see e.g., Toohey (1992) 218; Mezzanotte (1995) 381; McGuire (1997) 80; Marks (2005a) 243–44.

⁸³ See Henderson (1997) 142 n. 49.

⁸⁴ On the relationship between the comparisons at *Sil. Pun.* 3.614–15 and *Virg. Aen.* 6.804–5, see e.g., Spaltenstein (1986) 252; Ripoll (1998b) 39; Marks (2005a) 243. On Domitian and Hercules in the *Punica* and elsewhere, see e.g., Anderson (1928) 54; Sauter (1934) 78–85; Scott (1936) 141–46; Galinsky (1972) 141; Liebeschuetz (1979) 172–73; Palagia (1986) 144–46; Hardie (1993a) 68; Malamud and McGuire (1993) 211–12; Mezzanotte (1995) 372–73 and 376; Darwall-Smith (1996) 133–36, 172–77, and 186–87; Asso (2003); Marks (2005a) 222–23. On Domitian and Bacchus in the *Punica* and elsewhere, see e.g. Sauter (1934) 85–88; Scott (1936) 147; Mezzanotte (1995) 371–72 and 380; Marks (2005a) 224.

cult statuary,⁸⁵ so Silius imposes on Scipio the aspects of various exemplary figures, including those of Hercules and, indirectly, Domitian himself. We might merely conclude that those personae do not sit comfortably on Scipio's republican person, but the sequence of substitutions also indicates an identity that is disconcertingly interchangeable. The very image of republicanism takes on faces that turn out to be those of transcendent individual power and autocracy, so that republicanism may mask autocracy but itself be revealed as illusion. So scrutinized, Roman history is unmasked as a sequence of substitutions in which any representative of republican self-limitation or collective spirit is overshadowed by emergent individuals, some of whom, including Scipio himself, are exemplary figures of the republic and exemplars of republicanism. The spirit of Rome, it appears, has always been exemplified not by the collective but by the powerful individual.

The praise of Octavian at *Aeneid* 6.801–5 that Silius echoes in his salute to Scipio at *Punica* 17.645–54 is in the style of Alexander-panegyric. Silius has already recalled the immediately preceding verses of prophetic praise of Octavian at *Aeneid* 6.791–805, with a shift of *epideixis* from Octavian to Alexander at *Punica* 13.763–66.⁸⁶ Signs of the inspirational, if questionable, influence Alexander's ghost exerts on Scipio during their underworld-encounter are present at the end of *Punica* 16, in Scipio's response to Fabius' challenge. When the former speaks specifically against the delay imposed on a destiny that the gods have reserved for him (16.670), he echoes the advice given by Alexander in the underworld-episode.⁸⁷ With the final two verses of the poem, Silius further, if indirectly, reinforces the relationship between Scipio and Alexander through reference to their shared father, Jupiter.⁸⁸ If Alexander's drive to power and glory is fully realized through Roman emperors,⁸⁹ Scipio, who may have encouraged a connection

⁸⁵ See e.g., Mart. 9.64 and 9.65.

⁸⁶ McGuire (1985) 173 n. 22 notes the frequently made suggestion that the description of Alexander is intertextual with Anchises' words on Octavian here. Helzlsouer (1996) 285 notes that the description of Scipio at Sil. *Pun.* 15.157 recalls that of Octavian at Virg. *Aen.* 8.680.

⁸⁷ McGuire (1985) 172 with 172 n. 6 compares Liv. 28.43–44. On Scipio's resentment of (Fabius') delay, see also Kießel (1979) 143–48; Laudizi (1989) 133–34. Laudizi (1989) 134 finds in the envy of which Scipio here accuses his opponents further association with Alexander.

⁸⁸ See McGuire (1985) 168.

⁸⁹ On Alexander-panegyric and Alexander as paradigm in Rome, see e.g., Heuss (1954) 65–105; Norden (1899) and (1903) 315–16; Kienast (1969) 430–56; Weinstock

between himself and Alexander,⁹⁰ provides a typological link. The achievements Silius describes at *Punica* 17.625–54, which connect Scipio to Octavian and Alexander through intertextuality with Virgil's *Aeneid*, associate Africanus with Silius' own portrayal of Domitian in Jupiter's words at *Punica* 3.607–29. The apparition of Alexander at *Punica* 13.763 may, furthermore, recall that of Octavian in *Aeneid* 6,⁹¹ while the highly visual triumph with which the *Punica* ends might bring to mind not only Domitian's iconographic connection with Hercules but also the fact that Domitian's appearance was associated with the image of Alexander.⁹² So Silius reveals in the *Punica* a pattern of Roman conduct that Alexander's quest for personal power and glory establishes, Virgil's Octavian realizes, and Silius' Domitian surpasses. Scipio Africanus Maior is a pivotal figure in that pattern, providing a model for exemplars of subsequent Roman autocracy.

6. *Intertextuality and closure*

In the final two verses of the *Punica*, Silius asserts that Scipio is Jupiter's son, thereby apparently removing any doubt about Scipio's paternity, and perhaps confirming him as Jupiter's regal representative on earth.⁹³ Yet our poet's truth regarding Scipio's relationship to Jupiter is more complex than might at first appear, thanks not least to intertextuality with Lucan's *De bello civili*. At *De bello civili* 1.33–39, Lucan gestures towards accepting the wicked criminality of civil war as the cost of Nero's principate. He specifically compares that civil war to the gigantomachy in which Jupiter *Tonans* was victorious, and represents bloodshed at the battle of Pharsalus as providing satiation for Hannibal. At 1.45–66, Lucan follows up his rationalization of civil war as the worthwhile price to pay for Nero with prolepsis of the emperor's

(1971); Weippert (1972); Green (1978); Sidari (1982); Billerbeck (1986b) 3137–38; André (1990); Marks (2005a) 146–47.

⁹⁰ See e.g., Scullard (1970) 237; McGuire (1985) 168.

⁹¹ See e.g., Juhnke (1972) 289; Reitz (1982) 111–14. Helzlsouer (1996) 280 n. 3 compares Sil. *Pun.* 13.763–66 with Virg. *Aen.* 6.791–805, especially “this is that [man]” (*hic ille est*) in Sil. *Pun.* 13.763 with “this is the man, this is he” (*hic uir, hic est*) in Virg. *Aen.* 6.791.

⁹² On Domitian and Alexander-panegyric, see e.g. Fears (1977) 57–60, 222–23, and 249; Coleman (1988) 78–79 and 134; Geysen (1996) 76–81, 86 n. 45, and 96; Morgan (1997) 213; Marks (2005a) 227–29.

⁹³ See Marks (2005a) 193–94, 200, and 206.

apotheosis. Lucan ironizes that passage, if it is not already ironic, at 7.445–59. There he declares that the Romans have no gods, that they lie that Jupiter reigns (*mentimur regnare Iovem*, 7.447), and that the gods do not care about mortal matters. He also asserts that the human victims of Pharsalus have moderate revenge for divine mistreatment because civil war will equate Caesars with Olympians. Romans will adorn the departed with thunderbolts and stars, and they will swear by shadows in the gods' temples.

Although Silius' final assertion of Scipio's divine paternity seems to counter sarcasm at *De bello ciuili* 7.445–59 concerning Jupiter's kingship and the deification of human beings, the parallelism of *Punica* 17.645–54 with Lucan's epic is not straightforwardly antiphrastic. Silius effects in *Punica* 17.653–54 a thunderously epic but provocatively superficial inversion of *De bello ciuili* 8.871–72, where Lucan echoes Callimachus' *Hymn to Zeus* 1.8–9 in characteristically paradoxical voice, affording epic testimony to a truth he hopes will be disbelieved.⁹⁴ Even as he denies deceit, Silius self-reflexively designates Scipio's divine descent the product of poetic exaggeration. Intertextuality with Lucan gives the Cretan lie to Silius' insistence that Scipio is Jupiter's son, and recalls the possibility raised by Polybius, Livy, and Valerius Maximus, that Scipio was a charismatic manipulator of religion rather than Jupiter's true son.⁹⁵

Intertextuality with Lucan's *De bello ciuili* also associates Scipio's Herculean gigantomachy with the evils of civil war as prelude to autocracy, and raises the issue of Jupiter's role and reliability in Silius' epic. In the light of the passages from *De bello ciuili* 1 and 7 considered above, it is legitimate to regard as symbolically suggestive of civil war the gigantomachy of Hercules, to whom at *Punica* 17.649 Silius likens Scipio, supposed son of Jupiter *Tonans*.⁹⁶ It has been argued that Silius' Jupiter has a valid plan, according to which his son, Scipio, is to become the chief god's vice-regent on earth, a semi-divine king who links god and man and republic and empire; that Jupiter directs and legitimates Scipio's assumption of personal power; and that Jupiter's will is beyond question unless we allow for a separation of divine king from mortal king such as Silius denies in the closing verses of the

⁹⁴ See Hardie (1993a) 39; Hardie (1997a) 158–60.

⁹⁵ See e.g., Plb. 10.4–5; Liv. 26.19.3–9 with Levene (1993) 61–62; V. Max. 1.2.2 with Wardle (1998) 139–40.

⁹⁶ See McGuire (1985) 167.

poem.⁹⁷ Yet Silius' final affirmation of Scipio's paternity is open to question and recalls in particular Lucan's treatment of civil war, while Jupiter's silence on Roman strife is both intra- and intertextually striking. We may justly query the trustworthiness of a prophecy with which Silius' Jupiter, expanding Virgil's epic precedent, aims to convince his pro-Roman daughter, Venus, not merely to spare but altogether to dispel her anxiety, and in which he is palpably economical with the truth.⁹⁸

The *Punica* ends with a triumph, and triumph is strongly closural.⁹⁹ Yet by echoing of Lucan's *De bello civili*, Silius points to the way in which the figure of Africanus is himself unclosed, the stuff of epic representation and its reception. In the final apostrophe of the *Punica*, Silius implies Scipio's translation to heaven in terms that echo Lucan's critique of emperor-cult and in a style reminiscent of Lucan's participation as narrator in his own narrative. Scipio thereby becomes, once more, forerunner for dangerous individualism at Rome, while Silius, like Lucan, can only feign foreclosure on a Roman history that included not only civil war and Caesarism but also Scipio's political demise.

The competitive Homeric hero did not offer an easily assimilable pattern of heroism for Roman epic, inasmuch as the latter was supposed to idealize subordination of the one to the many. Ennius' epic *Annales*, written at the height of the republic, was not a simple celebration of Roman collectivity and cooperation but reflective of and contributive to an ethos of competition, its heroic models key players in the process of acculturation at Rome.¹⁰⁰ Aeneas' behavior at the end of Virgil's *Aeneid* ascribes to proto-Romanity a *furor* that is modeled on Achillean μῆνις and the competitive culture of which it is a product. Aeneas' moment of madness is a disconcerting finale to the quasi-civil war that constitutes Virgil's *maius opus*, his epic proper. In the epic figuration of Lucan's *De bello civili*, the insanity of civil war is epitomized as a contest between the competitive Pompey and Caesar. Silius takes for his subject matter the heyday of republican Rome, but collapse

⁹⁷ See Marks (2005a) 206.

⁹⁸ Cf. Virg. *Aen.* 1.257 and Sil. *Pun.* 3.571–72. On the reliability of Jupiter's prophecy in *Punica* 3, see e.g., Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2557; Feeney (1991) 305–6; Marks (2005a) 267–68. Cowan (2002) 139–41 comments on the obscurity Silius ascribes to Jupiter at *Pun.* 11.122–23.

⁹⁹ See Fowler (1997b) 15–16.

¹⁰⁰ Pace Goldberg (1995) 111–34.

into civil war and the emergence of the empire, which the emperor of Silius' contemporary Rome most obviously instantiates, are woven into the poem's text. Presentation in the *Punica* of the transcendent, pre-eminent hero caught up in an ethic of competition articulates a central tension within the republic: encouragement of a simultaneously productive and destructive spirit of emulation and individualism. That said, the shifting figure of Scipio with which the *Punica* ends is also suggestive of the Virgilian and post-Virgilian epic hero's lack of definition,¹⁰¹ of the difficulty of determining what it meant to be epic hero or Roman or both, and of the ancient epic poet's own endlessly emulative practice.

¹⁰¹ See Hardie (1993a) 39.

CHAPTER TEN

THE SHIELD AND THE SWORD: Q. FABIVS MAXIMVS AND M. CLAVDIVS MARCELLVS AS MODELS OF HEROISM IN SILIVS' *PVNICA*

Marco Fucecchi

1. *Introduction*

In his *Life of Fabius* (19.1), Plutarch recounts that soon after the battle of Cannae, when it was clear that Hannibal did not intend to launch a direct attack against the city of Rome, the senate regained the courage to send armies and generals against the Carthaginian enemy. Of these, the most famous are Fabius Maximus and Claudius Marcellus, both revered by the people for opposite reasons.¹ At this point the Greek writer introduces an unusual, yet ‘anticipated’ syncrisis, which, for a change, involves two Romans and stresses differences rather than similarities between the two leaders (*Fab.* 19.2–3). Marcellus, as Plutarch has already noted elsewhere,² is a great commander and, even more, a brave and impetuous warrior; very much an example of a Homeric hero: he is warlike (φιλοπόλεμος) and proud, fierce as only a young man could be (ἀγέρωχος).³ Fabius, by contrast, has adopted a different kind of tactics, a sort of guerrilla warfare, by which to stem Hannibal’s raging momentum in Italy after the victories at the Ticinus, Trebia, and Trasimene: he is patient and cautious, but also opportunistic. He is convinced that the Carthaginian, when deprived of the prospect of showing his military prowess in pitched battles, will very

¹ Fabius had already dealt with Hannibal before Cannae (*Fab.* 4–13); Marcellus would clash with the Carthaginian only after that great defeat.

² In *Marc.* 1 and 9, which the author claims to have composed before the *Life of Fabius* (*Fab.* 19.2).

³ Plu. *Marc.* 1.2 and *Fab.* 19.2. Other keywords include πλήκτης (“strong and aggressive”) and τὸ γαῦρον (“fierceness, boldness”). Nonetheless in *Marc.* 1.3, Plutarch hints at the more relaxed human temperament which characterizes the hero in his everyday life, together with a genuine fondness for Greek culture. Marcellus is younger than Fabius (who dies a few years later), but the opposition young vs. old is also influenced by the polarization of characters (see also n. 62 and the conclusion).

soon be weakened and lose confidence, as well as the power to attract new allies to his side.

At the conclusion of this brief comparison, Plutarch (*Fab.* 19.3 and *Marc.* 9.7) appropriates a story regarding the two generals given by the stoic philosopher and historian Posidonius of Apamea (second/first century BC), according to which the contemporary Romans used to call respectively Fabius the “shield” (θυρεόν) and Marcellus the “sword” (ξίφος).⁴ Such a perfect ‘complementarity’ of characteristics naturally recommends their integration: because the people wish to profit by their admirable qualities, as Plutarch says, Fabius and Marcellus are named *consules* together (as in 214 BC, after being *consules suffecti* the year before), or in alternative years (as in the *triennium* 210–208 BC).⁵

The same contrasting parallelism characterizes the portrait of Fabius and Marcellus in Silius Italicus’ *Punica*, where they share a primary, exemplary role in the long difficult phase of the conflict preceding the final rise of Scipio Africanus.⁶ Fabius’ important achievements in the collective effort made by republican Rome to resist the Carthaginian invader complement Marcellus’ deeds.⁷ Moreover, in the episodes involving Fabius and Marcellus, the poet displays a general tendency to compare the attitude and social behavior of these two leading figures in the senate.⁸ Such an implicit ‘competition’ also contributes, indirectly, to the construction of a new model of heroism and leadership, which, at first, will guide Rome to victory in the war and then will

⁴ Posidon. F 259 Kidd.

⁵ Marcellus was consul in 210 and 208 BC for the fourth and fifth times (the first time was in 222); Fabius served as consul in 209 BC for the fifth time (the first was in 233).

⁶ Though, admittedly, together with other generals such as Paulus, the martyr of Cannae. Cf. Jupiter’s prophecy in *Pun.* 3.585–90.

⁷ In chronological order: Fabius’ rescue of Minucius’ troops in book 7; Marcellus’ sally before the walls of the besieged Nola in book 12, and his conquest of Syracuse in book 14.

⁸ Consider, for example, the situation in Rome in the aftermath of Cannae. Fabius invites the Roman people to welcome Varro’s return home, showing humane solidarity towards the defeated consul, as well as great care for the integrity of the whole community (10.605–39; see also n. 42). On the contrary, when the senate rejects the outrageous demands of the Capuan delegation, Marcellus’ speech (which immediately follows Fabius’ severe but controlled indignation) seizes the opportunity to criticize bitterly the consul himself for his cowardly sluggishness (11.97–109). It is worth noting that in other ancient sources Fabius’ and Marcellus’ dramatic roles are not at all emphasized.

have a decisive function in shaping the political future of the Roman state.

Fabius and Marcellus exhibit different styles of warfare, divergent attitudes toward commanding the troops, and idiosyncratic ways of interpreting the relationship between political activity and the exercise of military power; and yet they do not do so to the exclusion of important behavioral analogies. Some of these similarities are accentuated because of the poet's desire to fill in certain *lacunas*: e.g., greater emphasis on the older Fabius' 'energetic' conduct through the superimposition of the Herculean paradigm (in specific circumstances, Fabius may function as an embodiment, almost a historical *figura*, of the mythological hero); or the peculiarly 'Ciceronian' (and, in a sense, Fabian) portrait of Marcellus at the siege of Syracuse, culminating in the final virtuous exhibition of moral resolve, clemency, and restraint.

As we shall see in the following analysis, this search for 'completeness' bears indirect witness to the interrelatedness of these two figures and their 'incompleteness' as models of heroism. With his absolute confidence in a cautious strategy, Fabius will firmly oppose the plan to free Italy from Hannibal and bring the war into Africa, while fierce bravery and a 'Homeric' thirst for personal glory will drive Marcellus to a tragic death.⁹ These two protagonists of some of the most crucial episodes in the Second Punic War both lack the effectively charismatic stature of the one who is finally destined to triumph over the enemy; a general whose portrait, throughout the narrative, provides a more complete paradigm of heroism, in a synthesis of human and divine qualities: Scipio Africanus.

2. *The heroism of seruire: Fabius and the Herculean model*

Providentia ("care," as well as "foresight"), *constantia* ("constancy, fearlessness"), aversion to every kind of doubtful venture (mostly in war), great strategic ability, discipline and resolve in commanding armies: all of these qualities belong to an aged senator, an experienced helmsman of the state, who at the beginning of the *Punica* is called upon to lead an embassy to Saguntum and Carthage, because of Hannibal's hostility

⁹ Compare Tipping's observations (195, 204, 210) on the pursuit of glory as a driving force behind Scipio's actions.

against Rome's allies (*Pun.* 1.679–94; 2.3–6).¹⁰ This member of the Roman aristocracy is to become, in a few months, the sole, steady anchor for Rome, the powerful city that has already suffered three humiliating defeats at home. Fabius will make a break with this negative trend by interpreting the role of general in a completely different way, a behavior less heroic when compared to the *uelox uirtus* (“restless valor,” 4.99) exhibited (though unsuccessfully) by the elder Scipio at the Ticinus and Trebia, yet certainly more reliable than Flaminius’ inconsiderate leadership at Trasimene.

It is Jupiter himself who, at the end of the sixth book, refers to Fabius as a “reassuring shelter” for Rome (*gremio...tuto*, 6.610)¹¹ and stresses the leader’s moral integrity (6.613–17) and his skill both as general and statesman (*par ingenium castrisque togaeque*, “a temperament balanced in peace and at war,” 6.617).¹² In the rest of this introductory prologue, the narrator points out Fabius’ constant care to avoid putting the lives of his soldiers at risk (6.621–22 and 6.625–26); based on this topic are the *pastor*-themed metaphors that are fully developed in the following book, which is almost entirely devoted to the Cunctator himself.¹³ This celebratory section culminates in the aetiology of the *Fabia gens* (6.628–36), followed by a coda exalting Fabius’ superiority over the heroic (and tragic) deed of the 300 Fabii (6.637–40). The aetiology itself describes the result of a Herculean enterprise: Hercules

¹⁰ On the senatorial debate between Fabius and Lentulus (*Pun.* 1.672–94), which Silius may have drawn on annalistic sources, cf. D.C. fr. 55.3–5; Zonar. 8.22 (where the scene takes place after the fall of Saguntum). See Lucarini (2004) 107–10, with further bibliography. On Fabius as embassy leader see also indirectly Liv. 21.18.1 and 3; on his role in declaring war (*Pun.* 2.382–90), cf. Liv. 21.18.13; Flor. *Epit.* 1.22.7. Fabius and Marcellus are the only Roman leaders mentioned (or evoked: Marcellus at 1.132–33) in *Pun.* 1–2. For a general survey on Fabius’ character and his role in the *Punica*, see von Albrecht (1964) 68–78; Kissel (1979) 116–27; Ahl, Davis, Pomeroy (1986) 2523–31; Bernstein (2008) 139–45 and his essay in this volume (381–84).

¹¹ Similar metaphors are found already at 2.384, 2.387, 7.8, and 7.743 with wide use of words such as *gremium* or *pectus*.

¹² Translations of Silius are adapted from Duff (1934); otherwise they are my own.

¹³ In book 7, two similes, centered around the *pastor* motif (Fabius’s night watch of his “herd,” in 7.126–30; and the *pastor* coming just in time to rescue a lamb from the wolf’s mouth, in 7.717–22), allude thematically and structurally (though with a strong reversal of perspective) to two comparisons in Virgil’s *Aeneid* 9: at 9.59–64, where the wild beast’s (frustrated) point of view is assumed, and at 9.339–41, where the lion/Euryalus (soon to be killed) momentarily succeeds in slaughtering the herd (contrary to what happens in the second simile in Silius). The metaphorical expression *plena castra* (“full camp,” *Pun.* 6.626 and 7.399) is also an elaboration of Virgilian imagery (*pleno ouili*, *Aen.* 9.59 and *plena ouilia*, “full sheepfold,” *Aen.* 9.339).

arrives in Latium as the herdsman of Geryon's cattle and from his sexual intercourse with king Evander's daughter the first of the Fabii is born.¹⁴ Curiously enough, this short account focuses on Hercules' erotic escapades and the licentious aspects of his stay (*regia uirgo/hospite uicta...de crimine laeto/procreat*, "the royal maiden defeated by her guest...from this happy crime gives birth," 6.633–35)¹⁵ and does not mention the more famous heroic feat which, as we know from Virgil, actually takes place during this same time, namely his victorious conflict with Cacus.¹⁶

Against this backdrop, throughout the seventh book of the poem, the poet orchestrates an encomiastic discourse, encapsulated by a hymnodic frame,¹⁷ where the historical sequence of events shows the positive effects of the new war tactics introduced by Fabius.¹⁸ Fabius' heroism reaches its climax in the final detailed narrative of his intervention to rescue Minucius, the *magister equitum*, who having received the command of half the troops rushes hastily into battle (7.494–99). In this perilous time, the Delayer does not take strategy and tactics into account and puts Rome's welfare and the collective interest before his own fame and reputation. He forgets the wrongs he has suffered, the impatience and envy on the part of the Roman people, and the impudence of his subordinates; after giving his own son a lesson in diplomacy (7.539–65), he finally enters the fray.¹⁹

¹⁴ Perhaps the story results from the conflation (by Silius?) of a legend about the Herculean origin of the Fabii (*Pun.* 2.3; *Ov. Fast.* 2.237–42) with an obscure tradition (cf. Varro and others mentioned in Servius *ad Aen.* 8.51) about Evander's daughter, Pallantia, raped by Hercules and buried upon her death on the Palatine hill, which is in turn named after her. On the relation between Fabius and Hercules in the *Punica*, see Ripoll (1998a) 118–23 (with further bibliography).

¹⁵ The brilliance of this evocation is quite different from the obscure atmosphere characterizing the story of the rape of Pyrene, another tragic victim of Hercules' return from Geryon's land (3.420–41; see Augoustakis [2003a]).

¹⁶ As we shall see, this reticence does not exclude a secondary, metonymical reuse of the Virgilian intertext, when Silius narrates the heroic performance of Fabius (Hercules' latest offspring) during the Second Punic War.

¹⁷ Fernandelli (2006) 73–76 and *passim*. The reference to the Herculean (and Virgilian) archetype is soon put to work; see *Pun.* 7.18 ~ *Virg. Aen.* 8.188–89.

¹⁸ Fabius' own program (...*uincam/seruare inuitos*, "I shall persist in saving you, though unwilling," 7.223–24) is celebrated by the narrator's comment at 7.377–80 on how Fabius' tactics saved the Roman people from Hannibal (see also 7.5–15, 91–95, 123–26).

¹⁹ For the conversation between Fabius and his son (and its 'non-Livian' origin), see Marks (2005a) 25 n. 33 and Bernstein (2008) 139–45, as well as Bernstein's article in this volume (382–83). According to the narrator's invocation to the Muse (7.217–18), Fabius is going to defeat the *bina castra*, both the external and the internal enemy of

The poet integrates the historical features of Fabius' character by painting the general's portrait as an epic hero; Silius particularly concentrates on Fabius' energy in fighting through the miraculous intervention of Hercules, the divine ancestor of the Fabian *gens*. The initial remark on Fabius' *uiride senium* ("green old age," 7.3–4) is successively confirmed by the quick reaction with which he rushes out of the camp (7.567–68),²⁰ but it is really given physical evidence only when the old warrior literally becomes "greater" (...*maiores*.../*maioresque*, 7.591–92), stronger, faster, and in a word younger (*membris uenit uigor*, "strength came into his body," 7.594).²¹ The general at once enters the realm of the epic hero par excellence who engages in a canonical *aristeia*, during which he kills numerous enemies (7.598–616); and, what is more, his example engenders a competitive spirit in the Roman ranks (7.617–704).²²

Thereafter the Herculean Fabius becomes the absolute protagonist again, as his enterprise culminates with the rescue of Roman soldiers (7.705–50): the poetic narration enriches the pathos of Livy's account

the state. As for the relevance of Camillus' *pater patriae* model on Fabius' portrait, see 7.557–63 and Cowan in this volume (339); for Scipio's, cf. 17.652. In Liv. 22.29.2, Fabius delays the settling of accounts and declares, without addressing anyone in particular, his intention to execute his duties.

²⁰ This is a rather emphatic description compared to what Fabius announces at 7.237–38 (cf. also Juno's gesture in Virg. *Aen.* 7.620–22; Fernandelli (2006) 110–14). The subsequent comparison (7.569–74) to the violent winds, Boreas and Africus, signals his temporary entry into the realm of 'archaic' heroism. According to Liv. 22.30.10, Hannibal comments *a posteriori* that Fabius, after a long stay on the mountain ridge as a threatening cloud, has finally brought storm and torrential rain (*cum procella imbrem dedisse*).

²¹ Cf. Plut. *Fab.* 12.5 and also Cic. *Sen.* 10. The following simile with the *trisaeclesienex* Nestor during his *secunda aetas* ("second stage of life," 7.596–97) serves Silius' rejuvenation motif by capitalizing on the typical attitude of the old Homeric hero to recount the adventures of his brave youth (e.g., *Il.* 1.260–72; 7.133–35, [Spaltenstein (1986) 486]; and Ov. *Met.* 12.439–48). The phrasing of verse 592 also denotes an interesting syntactic allusion to *Od.* 24.369, where thanks to Athena, the old Laertes appears to be greater and more muscular, ready to enter the fight: *μείζονα δ' ἢ ἐπάρως καὶ πάσσονα θῆκεν ιδέσθαι*, "she made him look greater and strouter than before"; cf. *maioresque dedit cerni* in 7.592.

²² Worth noting, among others, is the performance of the young Cato, the future *Censor* (7.680–704), whose role is elaborately given space in other battles, where the Roman army is led by generals more or less directly tied to the Fabian model (e.g., in 10.13–16, near Paulus; in 15.730–34, praising Livius, the old brave chief, who was unrightly excluded from political duties and whose help had so far been guiltily neglected by the Roman people). In developing this relation between Fabius and Cato, Silius may have been inspired by Cic. *Sen.* 10–13.

(22.29.3–6)²³ and, as a subplot, seems to evoke the mythical rescue of the cattle from Cacus' cave, performed by Hercules himself and narrated by Evander in the eighth book of the *Aeneid*. In this case, however, the heroic exhibition of force and slaughter is compressed into the initial distich, relating the violent action through which Fabius penetrates the enemy line that encircles Minucius and his troops. Rather, a strong didactic purpose is still at work as demonstrated by another exemplary moment, rich in symbolic value, which takes place once the *dictator* gets to the heart of the battle: while protecting the young *magister equitum* with his shield (and so saving the life of another 'son'),²⁴ Fabius once again urges his own son to unleash his rage upon the enemy (7.710–13). Eager to avenge the malicious maneuver used by Hannibal to discredit his father (7.711–13; cf. 7.260–67), Fabius' young son enthusiastically engages in a rivalry of virtue with him (7.713–14).²⁵ At this point, Silius introduces a second comparison based upon the theme of the *pastor* (7.717–22).²⁶ It may be considered as a prelude to the scene of Fabius' collective rescue of the troops:

torpebant dextrae, et sese meruisse negabant
 seruari, subitisque bonis mens aegra natabat,
 ut, qui conlapsa pressi iacuere ruina,
 eruta cum subito membra et nox atra recessit,
 coniuient solemque paudent agnoscere uisu. (Pun. 7.725–29)

The soldiers' hands were numbed, and they said they were not worthy to be rescued; they were stunned and confused by sudden good fortune. Even so, men buried beneath a collapsed building, when dug out and suddenly released from that dark night, blink with their eyes and fear to see the sun again.

Minucius and his soldiers are hopeless victims condemned to death or, as the reader is invited to consider them, living dead. Fabius' intervention drives away the darkness from their eyes, bringing a sudden

²³ Cf. Livy's only empathetic note in 22.29.3.

²⁴ Minucius will call him *sancte genitor* ("sacred father," 7.737) and the whole army will share his devotion (7.735); cf. Liv. 22.30.2.

²⁵ At 7.713 the rare verse-end *arte paterna* (recurring at 1.240; cf. also *Ilias* 350) might be a clue attesting to the subliminal presence of Virgil's Cacus story as an intertext (*Aen.* 8.226). The solidarity between father and son in virtue and courage will produce tragic consequences in the case of the Marcelli (15.353–63 and 375–80), while the *puer* Scipio, though never represented in the act of fighting near his father, is able to save his father's life at the Ticinus (4.454–79; Marks [2005a] 115–22).

²⁶ Here the lamb, victim of the wild wolf, manages with its bleating to assist the shepherd's pursuit (*auditis... balatibus*, 7.720).

blinding light, while he also makes them feel disoriented, because of their guilty conscience: this is a slightly surrealistic anticipation of Minucius' overt admission of fault and solemn thanksgiving, in which the same imagery reappears.²⁷ The simile in 7.727–29 provides the closest point of contact with the Virgilian description of Hercules' rescue of the cattle. The blending of surprised incredulity and fear experienced by the victims, who are suddenly exhumed and feel as if they were returning to life, recalls (though by contrast) Cacus' amazement, when Hercules wrenches away the ridge over his 'infernal' cave-abode, and brings to mind even more explicitly the image Virgil uses for the monster's reaction:

at specus et Caci detecta apparuit ingens
regia, et umbrosae penitus patuere cauernae,
non secus ac si qua penitus ui terra dehiscens
infernās reseret sedes et regna recludat
pallida, dis inuisa, superque immane barathrum
cernatur, trepident immisso lumine Manes.
ergo insperata deprensum luce repente
inclusumque cauo saxo atque insueta rudentem
desuper Alcides telis premit... (Aen. 8.241–49)

But Cacus' cave and whole huge palace were unroofed and exposed to view, and his shadowy caverns were opened to all their depths: just as if, through some force, the very depths of earth were to gape and unbar the members of the underworld, the pale realms loathed by the gods, so that the vast abyss could be seen from above, with the ghosts in panic as the light floods in. So Cacus, then, caught suddenly by the unexpected daylight, pent up in the hollow rock, bellowing as never before. Alcides bombards him with missiles from above...²⁸

Before his desperate attempt to resist the 'invasion' (Aen. 8.251–55), Cacus shows surprise and fear,²⁹ a parallel with the spirits of the dead trembling because of the unexpected light shed from above: it is this collective reaction of the *Manes* which Silius mostly exploits and emphasizes in his simile (*qui...pressi iacuerē*, 7.727).³⁰ Moreover, the passage of

²⁷ See 7.737–45; cf. Liv. 22.29.8–11 and 30.3–6.

²⁸ Translation of the *Aeneid* passages is adapted from West (1990).

²⁹ According to the sequence *insperata deprensum* (Aen. 8.247), which precedes the violent and desperate attempt to fight against the hero.

³⁰ On the contrary, in *Il.* 20.57–65 (the earthquake caused by Poseidon during the battle of the Gods), only Hades' spectacular reaction of fear is taken into account (61–65). When choosing to match Cacus' first reaction with the picture of the trembling souls of the dead, Virgil uses a curious observation of *Scholion* b T on Hom. *Il.* 20.61

the *Punica* talks about the saving of human lives and leaves room for nothing but a residual presence of the underworld's landscape (*Stygiae...tenebrae*, 7.724). This is enough, however, to anticipate and support the encomiastic theme of the resurrection of the youth from near death, developed a few verses later by the narrator (*...e media iam morte renata iuventus*, 7.732) and by the very voice of the *magister equitum* himself (*reuocato* [scil. *mihi*] *ad lucis honorem*, "restored to the blessing of life," 7.737; *aeternas...uidimus umbras*, "we saw...the everlasting darkness," 7.741). The latter provides a paradoxical, though rhetorically effective, counterpart to the incredulous enthusiasm displayed by Minucius and his soldiers, who are alive and miraculously saved.

It is this paradox which stresses the peculiar Herculean quality of the *aristeia* performed by Fabius in the seventh book: a heroic savior of troops, a *pastor*, who after recovering his herd, enjoys in counting and sheltering them in a safe place (7.730–31). Just as when the inhabitants of ancient Latium see Cacus the monster trembling for the first time before Hercules (*Cacum uidere timentem*, *Aen.* 8.222), now Hercules' descendant Fabius is the first man who makes Hannibal turn his back to the Roman standards and flee (*primus...cedentia terga uidere/dederat Fabius*, 8.1–2). And yet, although Hercules has rendered the old *dictator* stronger and younger in order to allow him to enter the fight, Fabius' victory over his enemy recalls his ancestor's enterprise against Cacus in the specific sense of rescuing: the Delayer is revealed as a heroic warrior and great general because of his moral qualities rather than his renewed physical energy, owed to Hercules.

The liberation of Minucius' troops also offers an exemplary response to the story of the heroic sacrifice of the 300 Fabii, narrated at length to Hannibal by the prisoner Cilnius, at the beginning of the book (7.34–68).³¹ According to this account, the warlike *grex uirorum* ("band of heroes," 7.58)³² leaves Rome, though accompanied by two ill-omens: the creaking of the *porta Carmentalis* and a deep bellow coming from

("if even the Master of Death is afraid, how do we think human beings should react <when facing such an event>?").

³¹ Cf. also the brief reference at 6.637–40. The opposition between Fabius' winning strategy and the 'suicide' impetus of the Fabii, implicitly emerging from Virg. *Aen.* 6.845, is developed by Ovid in the account of the *dies Cremerensis* at *Fast.* 2.194–242; see Barchiesi (1994) 140; Merli (2000) 252–64.

³² The lack of a chief among them is indirectly pointed out (and euphemistically revised) when considering that each and everyone of those 300 deserves to be a general, who commands an army (7.46–47; Liv. 2.49.4; Ov. *Fast.* 2.200).

the *Ara Maxima*.³³ The *grex* then falls into an ambush, and no one of the warriors survives. At the end, Cilnius inserts the eulogy of the last great member of the family (7.62–63). Silius plays with a curious ‘hagiographical’ tradition, attested by Servius, according to which Q. Fabius Maximus is not a descendant of the only Fabius who survived at Cremera,³⁴ but actually *is* that Fabius himself.³⁵ In sum, Fabius is transformed into a very Roman Nestor, who ‘travels’ through centuries to accomplish finally his mission. But Cilnius’ portrayal of the *dictator* through the exemplary account of the heroic sacrifice of the 300 Fabii is not simply intended as an internal rhetorical device.³⁶ Together with the episode of saving Minucius, at the end of the book, it also generates another framework where the final celebration of Fabius’ ‘protective’ heroism stands in sharp contrast to the archaic, individualistic kind of bravery, already enacted by the ancient *Fabii*: Fabius’ heroism constitutes a different kind of emulation of the deeds of Hercules, the mythic ancestor of the family.

This first military success has an astonishing effect upon the Roman army, stimulating a new sense of solidarity based on devotion towards their leader (8.8–10). Soon, however, the *dictator*’s power will come to an end, as Juno, the staunch supporter of the Carthaginians (and traditionally an enemy of Hercules and of his offspring), exhorts the Punic (naturalized Latin) goddess Anna to stir Hannibal to battle:³⁷ the old general is going to abandon his post (8.34; cf. 8.216–17), while his substitute will be Varro, an *alter Flaminius* (8.35; 8.218; *contra* cf. 7.34).³⁸ As the war progresses, Fabius will no longer play an important military role, except for the conquest of Tarentum: this short account (15.320–33), however, does not have any particular heroic connotations, as it

³³ With regard to the first *omen*, Silius is less vague than Liv. 2.49.8 and Ov. *fast.* 2.201. The bellow coming from the *Ara Maxima* (*maximaque... mugiuit... ara*, 7.50) may be an invention. There is another possible hint at the Hercules and Cacus episode: the altar gives out a roar intended to recall the attention of the Fabii and discourage them from leaving Rome, but they do not heed it, contrary to what Hercules does in Ovid’s account (*Fast.* 1.559–62). Hercules pays due attention to the *reuocamina* (viz., the *omina*).

³⁴ Liv. 2.50.11; Ov. *Fast.* 2.237–42.

³⁵ Serv. *ad Aen.* 6.845: *unus tantum superfuit, Fabius Maximus...* (“only one survived, Fabius Maximus...”). Cf. Fucecchi (2003) 289–91.

³⁶ That is to impress Hannibal, who does not understand why the Romans entrust the old general with their destiny.

³⁷ On the episode, see Ganiban (91–96), Ariemma (241–47), and Keith (365–66) in this volume.

³⁸ On Varro, see Ariemma extensively in this volume (241–76).

rather concentrates on Fabius' proverbial care (*sollertia*, 15.324), as well as his ability to organize a skilful ruse.³⁹

In other episodic, though significant, appearances, the Delayer stands out as statesman, an eminent voice of the senate.⁴⁰ Nonetheless, especially in difficult moments, he continues to display the same qualities that characterize his previous heroic performance: *providentia* ("care, foresight"), *constantia* (i.e., control over negative feelings as *ira* and *invidia*, "wrath" and "hatred"), disregard for personal glory and devotion to collective interest, even though his 'energetic' côté is now epitomized by industry, quickness, and readiness to seize opportunities. In the aftermath of Cannae, for example, the old Fabius works hard to increase the people's self-confidence and is the most active promoter of Rome's reaction (10.592–604): his first words (a new political slogan) are "no longer delaying" (*non ulla relicta est, / ... cunctandi ratio*, 10.594–95).⁴¹ And once again, as in the Minucius episode (7.565), there is someone to save and someone to teach (10.605–39).⁴² Varro, the primary cause of the disaster, on account of his foolish conduct which was provocatively the opposite to Fabius' strategy,⁴³ is returning to Rome like a helmsman who has survived a shipwreck, while the rest of the crew has perished (10.608–12).⁴⁴ Before his arrival, Fabius intervenes in order to prevent him from becoming the victim of popular *ira*: it is not the time to look for a scapegoat; revenge is not the right way to heal a defeat (10.615–22). These words provoke a sudden metamorphosis: the citizens rejoice because Hannibal will not celebrate another

³⁹ Liv. 27.15.4–16.9. The account ends with the celebration of Fabius' restraint from, or at least indifference to, plunder, a detail which, according to the historian, differentiates his behavior from that of Marcellus at Syracuse (for the alternative, 'Ciceronian,' report by Silius, see the section on Marcellus below and n. 73).

⁴⁰ Consider, for instance, his speech against Virrius who demands that one of the two Roman consuls be chosen from Capua (11.90–97, Fabius restrains Torquatus' anger) and, above all, the speech delivered against Scipio's project of invading Africa (16.604–43, cf. Marks [2005a] 50–55).

⁴¹ The dying Paulus' recommendation to Lentulus that Fabius be put in charge, is fulfilled (10.282). Livy ascribed to Fabius a series of measures aimed at controlling Hannibal's movements and keeping order and discipline in the *urbs* (22.55.4–8).

⁴² In this case also, Fabius' narrative role is largely expanded when compared to Livy (22.61.13–15), who records the people's hearty reception of Varro without any mention of Fabius at all (but see Plut. *Fab.* 18.4–5).

⁴³ Fabius becomes Varro's polemical target (starting with 8.263–77), inasmuch as he is Paulus' absolute model of behavior.

⁴⁴ The image is perhaps suggested to Silius by an indirect speech which Livy ascribes to Varro himself (22.56.2). But it also recalls by contrast the comparison between Fabius and the 'successful helmsman' (*Pun.* 1.687–89).

funeral,⁴⁵ they display solidarity towards the *consul*, and they congratulate him for his confidence in Rome (10.623–29). Varro's reaction recalls that of Minucius upon seeing Fabius and his troops coming to his rescue: feeling ashamed and guilty, Varro cannot look the Romans straight in the eye (10.630–39). Once more, Fabius succeeds in rescuing someone who does not want to be saved (*uincam/seruare inuitos*, 7.223–24), restoring a victim of personal ambition to his place within the community. In doing so, he gives yet another exemplary lesson of self-control and offers proof of his innate, ancestral (viz., Herculean) vocation to benefit the Roman collective.

3. *Marcellus: The charismatic aspects of a 'not predestined' hero*

While Fabius is the first Roman general to force Hannibal to flee (*Pun.* 8.1–2), it is Marcellus who, after the disaster of Cannae, succeeds in defeating the Carthaginian army for the first time in this long war: traditionally the Roman victory before the walls of the besieged Nola is viewed as the turning-point in the Italian war, and Silius' *Punica* is no exception.⁴⁶ In that circumstance, as we shall see, Marcellus displays the distinctive qualities of a warrior and general: swift, decisive, courageous, dynamic. Though sharing extensive knowledge of warfare, vast experience in commanding troops, and unwavering moral fiber, Marcellus and Fabius embody two patterns of military leadership whose difference lies, above all, in temperament.

In particular, Marcellus' response to Fabius' typical (sometimes even unpopular) cautious tactics is a striking, though somewhat dangerous, inclination to launch impulsive assaults and to react aggressively to provocations. Silius underscores this contrast in the episode of the Capuan embassy, which asks the Roman senate to designate a Campanian consul to take the place of Paulus, killed at Cannae: this

⁴⁵ After Paulus' funeral (10.503–77); but see below n. 67, for Marcellus' death.

⁴⁶ *ille dies primus docuit, quod credere nemo/auderet superis, Martis certamine sisti/posse ducem Libyae* ("that day first taught us, what no one would dare to believe the gods above, namely that the Libyan leader could be withstood in battle," *Pun.* 12.273–75). Cf. Cic. *Brut.* 12 and Liv. 23.30.19. The phrase *ille dies primus* recalls in stark contrast the famous passage in Virg. *Aen.* 4.169–70. Silius may also be correcting Horace, who uses similar phraseology for Claudius Nero's victory at the battle of Metaurus (*Carm.* 4.4.39–41). On the links between Marcellus and Fabius, see Fucecchi (1993) 19–20 n. 7; Marks (2005a) 98 n. 89.

should be the price for remaining loyal to Rome (11.64–121).⁴⁷ The speech of the Capuan leader Virrius provokes an immediate reaction from Manlius Torquatus, who would have resorted to physical violence, had Fabius not intervened to mitigate the tension by affirming his impassioned rejection of the odious claim (11.90–97).⁴⁸ Then, in two speeches, unattested elsewhere, Marcellus and Fulvius (the future conqueror of Capua) oppose Virrius' proposal. Absolutely unable to keep calm (*impatiens...cohibere furorem*, 11.98), the former of the two addresses a polemical invitation to the surviving consul, Varro, bidding him to react (11.100–2). In addition to the irony of reproaching Varro for his *lenta...patientia* ("sluggish endurance"),⁴⁹ Marcellus' words represent a programmatic declaration of his own style of warfare. A quick reaction, attack, and fight before the walls of a town do not fit in with the Fabian model of command at all.

Furthermore, Marcellus' heroism differs from Fabius' inasmuch as it is fueled by personal motivation, namely the search for individual success and glory. Silius focuses on this bold trait in Marcellus' character by emphasizing his winning of the *spolia opima*. In 222 BC, at Clastidium, Marcellus had won a victory over the *Galli Insubri*: he had killed their chief Viridomarus and had dedicated the spoils to Jupiter Feretrius, being the third (and the last) to have succeeded in such an honorable feat, after Romulus and Cornelius Cossus. In the *Punica*, this prestigious title is practically recorded (or is simply alluded to) at every mention of Marcellus' name, before his first appearance as a protagonist.⁵⁰ Except for the conquest of Syracuse (book 14), the recurrent imagery of the *spolia opima* provides an obsessive background which lurks behind the general's major deeds performed during the Second Punic War, until his tragic death: his ambition to offer Hannibal's weapons to Jupiter proves deadly and, upon his death, vanishes forever.

⁴⁷ On this episode, see Bernstein in this volume (395–97).

⁴⁸ See above n. 40. In Liv. 23.22.8, Fabius prevents violence by inviting the assembly to disregard the claim.

⁴⁹ An allusion to Laelius criticizing Caesar's hesitation in Luc. 1.361; on this passage see Ariemma (forthcoming). This is naturally a way of stressing the consul's sudden and traumatic change of attitude after Cannae, but we might also think of Marcellus' aversion to sluggishness and therefore perhaps see a hidden remark concerning Fabius' tactics also.

⁵⁰ See 1.132–33; 3.587 and 8.254–55; cf. Virg. *Aen.* 6.855–56. In Silius, however, Marcellus is about to become the very victim of his own conquest of the *spolia opima*. On Marcellus' character in the *Punica*, see Burck (1984a) 6–73; Ahl, Davis, Pomeroy (1986) 2536–40; Ariemma (forthcoming).

During Hannibal's siege of Nola (12.161–280), which constitutes a synthesis of historical details from several Livian episodes,⁵¹ the Roman leader, forsaking the city walls,⁵² unexpectedly sallies forth and dares to fight openly the disoriented enemy. Such aggressive warfare is a surprising novelty, but it is legitimized by the change in circumstance and conditions: after their stay in Capua (and the attack from Venus and her army of winged Cupids against them, 11.385–413), Hannibal and his men are no longer the same.⁵³ Marcellus orders the attack as soon as he sees the enemy approaching. The text dramatizes the radical change in attitude by exploiting two diverse Virgilian scenes: first the reader is invited to recall Turnus' attack on the Trojan camp (*Aen.* 9.33–46);⁵⁴ and a few verses later, in Marcellus' exhortation to the soldiers, Silius alludes to Turnus' reaction to a forthcoming siege (*Aen.* 11.463–67).⁵⁵

The *spolia opima* stay at the core of the whole battle narrative. Marcellus immediately looks for Hannibal, in order to challenge him to a duel, but the latter has completely lost his previous confidence (12.195–98). Nonetheless, neither here at Nola nor elsewhere, will Marcellus have the opportunity to fight Hannibal in close combat.⁵⁶ The aim of

⁵¹ Venini (1972a) 519–22. For the Silian technique of re-elaborating on historical material, see also Danesi-Marioni (1986).

⁵² See Tipping (2004) 358–62.

⁵³ See Barchiesi (2001b) 336–39.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Aganoream... nubem* ("a 'cloud' of Carthaginians," *Pun.* 12.167) ~ [i.e., *hostium*] *nubem* (*Aen.* 9.33); *hostis adest* ("the enemy is at hand," *Pun.* 12.169) ~ *hostis adest* (*Aen.* 9.38).

⁵⁵ *tu limina dextrae/seruabis portae, Nero; tu conuerte cohortes/ad laeuam patrias et Lirenatia signa/clarum Volscorum Tulli decus. ast ubi iusso/per tacitum ruptis subita ui fundite portis/telorum in campos nimbum. feras ipse reuulsa/in medios equitumque traham certamina porta...* "You, Nero, must guard the entrance of the right-hand gate; and you Tullius, pride of the Volscians, march your men and the soldiers of Lirenatum to the gate of our left; but, when I give the word, open the gates in silence and hurl a sudden shower of missiles over the plain. I myself, when the gate opens, shall charge into their midst and the squadrons of cavalry will follow me," (*Pun.* 12.172–78); *tu, Voluse, armari Volscorum edice manipulis/duc' ait 'et Rutulos. equitem Messapus in armis,/et cum fratre Coras latis diffundite campis./pars aditus urbis firment turrisque capessant;/cetera, qua iusso, mecum manus inferat arma...* "You, Volusus, tell the Volscian contingents to arm. And take the Rutulians with you. Deploy the cavalry, Messapus, and you too Coras with your brother, in battle array over the whole plain. Some of you reinforce the approaches to the city and man the towers. The rest of you come and advance with me where I order..." (*Aen.* 11.463–67).

⁵⁶ Silius is obliged to dramatize here as elsewhere a series of interventions by Juno to save her protégé (12.201–2; cf. 10.45–58; 17.522–80)

acquiring Hannibal's spoils is impossible to accomplish and can only be 'surrogated' in a symbolic way: the poet manipulates the narrative and exploits the theme by transferring it to the exemplary feat of a young soldier, Pedianus.⁵⁷ As soon as Pedianus recognizes the helmet and spoils of the dead Paulus (12.224–25), unworthily and carelessly worn by the *puer* Cinyps (one of Hannibal's favorites), the young warrior is immediately forced by rage to recover the *insignia* of the consul killed at Cannae: it is as if the shade of the deceased were compelling him to avenge his death, as if he were momentarily possessed by Paulus' spirit (12.232–36). After killing the Carthaginian boy,⁵⁸ Pedianus returns to his unit, where Marcellus congratulates him (12.257–58). Spurred on by enthusiasm, Marcellus once again turns his attention to Hannibal and his weapons (12.258–59): this time it is not Juno's intervention that saves Hannibal's life, but rather the self-sacrifice of a soldier, Gestar (12.261–65). Therefore, the *spolia opima*, as a recurrent theme, provides a framework for the battle narrative, whose fundamental importance for the future development of war is inversely proportional to its very consistency and naturally goes well beyond the limited perspective of Marcellus' individual glory. Forcing Hannibal to flee from the camp for the first time,⁵⁹ Marcellus' victory proves to be far more important than any other in the past, even without getting hold of the *spolia opima* (12.279–80).⁶⁰

Nonetheless, as we are going to see, this obsessive mirage with regard to the *spolia opima* plays a decisive role in the episode of Marcellus' death (15.334–98), a severe blow which deprives Rome of the only leader that could have contended with Scipio for the title of winner in this Punic War (*iacet campis Carthaginis horror, / forsani Scipiadae confecti nomina belli / rapturus, si quis paulum deus adderet aevo*, "There lies dead the fear of Carthage! Perhaps, if some god had permitted Marcellus to live a little longer, he would have stolen from Scipio the glory of ending the

⁵⁷ The account (12.212–52) offers a good example of the art of digression in the *Punica*, which can hardly be considered completely superfluous.

⁵⁸ A pathetic scene, which celebrates beauty's power to appease anger (12.245–52).

⁵⁹ And bringing back rich booty, which also consists of weapons (12.276–77). On Gestar's substitute death, see Cowan in this volume (333–34).

⁶⁰ The triumphal celebration is another way of exploiting the Virgilian intertext in *Aen.* 6.855–56, also quoted in n. 50. Marcellus' triumph anticipates also Scipio's final triumph (cf. the last words: *Tonanti*, 12.280 ~ *Tonantis*, 17.654).

war,” 15.340–42).⁶¹ By expressing regret for something that could have potentially happened, through this contrary-to-fact condition, as well as through the lament for Marcellus’ untimely death, Silius implicitly matches the general’s destiny with that of epic ἄωρον.⁶² The category includes many heroes from the *Aeneid*, such as Euryalus, Nisus, Pallas, and Lausus; but the first emblematic and most fundamental representative of this group, in order of appearance, is Octavia’s son, Marcellus, whose shade Anchises shows to Aeneas immediately after that of the homonymous general of the Punic War. Taking advantage of this ‘proximity,’ Silius explores the thematic affinities between the two Marcelli, concentrating on the theme of the heroic *funus acerbum*.

The episode begins just as the Virgilian night raid episode of *Aeneid* 9 does. As is his usual practice, Marcellus discusses with his colleague Crispinus his military plans (15.345–46): their interaction denotes that of two comrades, *sodales*, just like Nisus and Euryalus in Virg. *Aen.* 9.179 and 182–83. Like Nisus, Marcellus has heroic aspirations (...*gestit.../mens*, “my mind desires,” *Pun.* 15.347–48 ~ *mens agitat mihi*, “my mind cannot rest,” *Aen.* 9.187); but, contrary to Nisus’ ‘protective’ behavior towards Euryalus (*te superesse uelim*, “I would like you to survive,” *Aen.* 9.212), the Roman *consul* is more direct in asking his colleague to accompany him (*te participem, Crispine, laboris/esse uelim*, “I would like you, Crispinus, to participate in the affair,” 15.350–51).

Aeneas’ salutation to Ascanius before re-entering the fight in the Virgilian episode is only evoked to draw a sharp contrast: while the Trojan hero still prevents his young son from experiencing the dangers of war (*Aen.* 12.435–36, 438–39), Marcellus proudly invites his own son⁶³ to follow in his footsteps (15.359) and to accomplish his first heroic deed

⁶¹ See Cowan’s analysis of counterfactuals in this volume. It is no coincidence that Silius uses the same expression, *Carthaginis horror*, applied to Scipio Africanus in another epitaph, in Lucr. 3.1034. At *Pun.* 15.340 in this volume (323–51), *iacet* produces a ‘framing effect’ with 1.132 *iacet ore truci* (“he lies dead with his fierce face”), the first indirect mention of Marcellus (see. n. 10), and is recalled a few verses later in Hannibal’s own words (15.384). In general, on Marcellus’ death see Burck (1984a) 61–68.

⁶² This might seem paradoxical, considering that when Marcellus dies, he is over 60 years old. Liv. 27.27.11 criticizes his incautiousness, unacceptable for such an aged and experienced consul, which not only brings about his demise but also jeopardizes the lives of his colleague and his troops; see also Plb. 10.32, above n. 3, Marks (2005a) 31 n. 50.

⁶³ Who is no longer a *puer*, as he was at the siege of Syracuse four years earlier, in 212 BC.

under the father's guidance (15.360).⁶⁴ Marcellus vows to consecrate to Jupiter Hannibal's weapons, won by his son ('*summe deum, Libyco faxis de praeside nunc his, / his umeris tibi opima feram*,' 15.362–63). Marcellus' longing to conquer the *spolia opima* recalls Mezentius' wish for Lausus (Virg. *Aen.* 10.774–76). This offering to Jupiter forms a natural contrast to the impiety of the Etruscan tyrant when he invokes what he considers to be the appropriate deities: his right hand and his missile (*dextra mihi deus et telum*, *Aen.* 10.773).⁶⁵ Nonetheless, this also provides fresh evidence of Marcellus' type of heroism, a heroism whose matrix, I submit, remains individualistic, an essentially archaic outlook.

This tragic epilogue is built on another intertextual *tour de force*. Upon seeing his son's sudden fall (15.375–76),⁶⁶ Marcellus immediately stops fighting: *tum patriae tremuere manus*... ("then the father's hands trembled," 15.377). The desperate fury of Virgilian models, such as Nisus or Mezentius, is now replaced by another Virgilian figure, filtered through an Ovidian lens. Daedalus is paralyzed by woe and a sense of guilt for Icarus' fall. As the protagonist of an extraordinary enterprise, the mythological architect of the Cretan labyrinth yearns for glory and, moreover, is a father (*bis patriae cecidere manus*, "twice the father's hands fell," Virg. *Aen.* 6.33; and the anticipation of the tragedy in Ov. *Met.* 8.211, *et patriae tremuere manus*).

In general, Silius' artistic aim in depicting Marcellus' death is not necessarily to be critical of the consul's behavior. In reality, the hunter of the *spolia opima*,⁶⁷ the brave general who is, however, unable to keep his impetuous character completely under control, does not fail to emerge as a great man. The poet rather softens some negative

⁶⁴ *Nouum Martem templare* here may also mean "to undertake a heroic deed, never attempted before," something extraordinary and even dangerous, as when Daedalus urges Icarus on (Ov. *Met.* 8.208; cf. *Pun.* 12.96–97). On this other 'heroic pair' of father and son, see below.

⁶⁵ Note also that in *Aen.* 9.267–71 Ascanius promises Nisus that he will win Turnus' spoils as the prize for his heroic enterprise (it is really the promise of a child to a young boy!).

⁶⁶ Something similar happens to Nisus, who, after escaping the enemies (*Aen.* 9.386), realizes that he has lost Euryalus (*Aen.* 9.389–90; cf. Daedalus' pathetic claim in Ov. *Met.* 8.231–32).

⁶⁷ Whose own spoils, on the contrary, will provide great glory for the enemy, as recognized by Hannibal himself before celebrating yet another funeral of a Roman consul (15.383–85). The following image of the tall pyre (15.387–88) completes the image of the corpse as described in the prophecy of book 1 (see n. 50). At Zama Hannibal exhorts an anonymous soldier to wear Marcellus' spoils (17.298–99).

judgments on this controversial figure, expressed by a significant portion of our historiographical sources,⁶⁸ by dramatizing the tragedy of Marcellus' heroism, the pathos of the untimely and unfortunate fate of a *triumphator*-to-be, who paradoxically dies like a father destroyed by his son's death.

Marcellus' ambition to acquire the *spolia opima* certainly influences his behavior to the extreme. But when he does not directly deal with Hannibal and is therefore free of this obsession, as is the case in the conquest of Syracuse in book 14, Marcellus shows exemplary care and skill in military tactics, moral self-control and firmness in keeping the victorious army under restraint, in other words, a set of qualities which directly recalls Fabius' model of heroism, the heroism of *seruare*. However, when Rome gets back on her feet thanks to leaders like Marcellus, the heroic model based on *providentia* and *constantia* evolves as well. Hannibal's first defeats (like the one at Nola) allow the Romans to recover their positions and allies and also to avenge their previous defeats, though always using clemency and without crossing the line.⁶⁹ Q. Fulvius at Capua, Marcellus at Syracuse, and finally Fabius himself at Tarentum,⁷⁰ all three demonstrate that the model of *uincere seruando* does not only entail victory without heavy losses (in which the Cunctator takes pride), but it also results into winning without inflicting excessive damage upon the vanquished either.

It is well known that Silius, following Cicero's judgment in his Verine orations,⁷¹ has Marcellus renounce his right to plunder the conquered city (14.665–75),⁷² an important point of contact with Fabius.⁷³ But at least in this circumstance, the two leaders show other behavioral affinities. When approaching Syracuse, Marcellus' army is unusually

⁶⁸ See above, n. 62.

⁶⁹ Ripoll (1998a) 453–55.

⁷⁰ I have not taken into account Scipio Africanus himself as *seruator* (in rescuing his father at the battle of the Ticinus in 4.425–29 and 454–79, with Marks [2005a] 115–19 or in saving the fiancée of a Spanish king and returning her to him untouched in 15.263–85).

⁷¹ Cic. *Ver.* 4.115–23 and 131, in particular 120–21; Burck (1984a) 53–60. This also speaks against a negative interpretation of Marcellus' character in Silius.

⁷² *Contra* cf. Plb. 8.3.5–7.9 and 8.37.9–10; Liv. 25.23–31 and 25.40.1–3; Plut. *Marc.* 13–21; Diod. 26.20.

⁷³ *Contra* cf. Liv. 27.16.8 (commenting on the difference between the conquest of Tarentum and the plundering of Syracuse ordered by Marcellus): *sed maiore animo generis eius praeda abstinuit Fabius quam Marcellus* ("Fabius showed more magnanimity in refraining from the plunder of this kind than Marcellus").

calm (14.179–80), while the *dux* himself is sedating his soldiers' *irae* (14.182–83). He also keeps the situation completely under control and waits for the right moment to launch an attack (14.186–87). Finally the order arrives only when it can no longer be delayed, and after Marcellus has already begged the local gods to look benevolently upon him (14.294–97).

However, Marcellus' appropriation of the Fabian model of leadership does not take place from the beginning, when he first lands in Sicily.⁷⁴ When facing a perilous situation, Marcellus behaves in a more familiar way at first. The enemy is weak, and the general, who displays utmost contempt for the Greeks (14.134), has no time to waste: under his orders the soldiers plunder the surrounding countryside and compete in slaughter and robbery.⁷⁵ So what is the explanation for such a sudden radical change? It is worth noting that Marcellus begins to show Fabian traits in the act of undertaking the siege of Syracuse, an ancient city with a glorious past. This is further highlighted by a narrative digression (14.148–77) concerning another act of clemency (*mile... dextrae decus*, 14.148): the story of Asilus' noble deed towards his ancient *dominus*, the Carthaginian Beria. Asilus, whose life had been saved by Beria at Trasimene (14.171–72), now recognizes his former savior on the battlefield and spares his life. We are not told whether Marcellus witnesses the scene or whether it has any bearing on his change in attitude. Naturally, the spectacle seems to infuse the narrative with a didactic meaning, fostering a more human, 'civilized' atmosphere.⁷⁶

The fall of Syracuse is delayed by a series of digressions: for instance, the ingenious defensive devices invented by Archimedes (14.300–52), the account of a naval battle (14.353–579),⁷⁷ and the pestilence that decimates the two armies (14.580–617; cf. Liv. 25.26.7–15). In this long *intermezzo*, where the Romans have the opportunity to exhibit virtue and courage, as well as organization, determination, and moral

⁷⁴ On book 14, see the discussion by Gibson (55–67) and Manolaraki (299–303) in this volume.

⁷⁵ *quis dextra antistet spoliisque excellat opimis* ("who would excel in deeds of valor and take the rich booty," 14.142). Here the 'neutralized' use of the *spolia opima* ("rich booty") has an ironic effect: the inferiority of his opponents prevents Marcellus from thinking about the real *spolia opima*, i.e., the spoils of a leader.

⁷⁶ Cf. the metamorphosis of the enraged Roman troops at Capua because of the miraculous intervention of Pan (13.314–47).

⁷⁷ Unattested elsewhere, it is modelled on the naval battle of Massilia in Lucan's third book (Burck 1984a).

fortitude, Marcellus hardly plays any role, as he receives from the poet only an indirect form of celebration. Once the pestilence ends, and after the danger of losing the general is averted, the siege starts anew (14.618–20).⁷⁸ Marcellus bolsters the army's spirit, which seems to rise again (14.625–26) and leads the decisive attack (14.634–35). Finally, the last digression relates the story of an army and its leader who visit Syracuse for the first time and are astonished by the countless and multifarious beauties of the city (14.641–65). The pious *dux* who laments the destiny of the mighty city now subdued to his sole power and will, the leader who forbids his soldiers to plunder the temples and the buildings (14.671),⁷⁹ deserves the title of the re-founder of Syracuse (*seruando condidit urbem*, “by saving it, he re-built the city,” 14.681). For the first (and last) time, Marcellus reveals his consciousness of the duties and responsibilities of a Roman conqueror.

4. Conclusion

In the *Punica*, Marcellus and Fabius emerge as the noblest figures of Roman republican aristocracy, whose system of moral and cultural values they exemplify. According to a well-established tradition, these two virtuous models of military and political leadership differ, above all, in temperament: Silius tends to polarize the distinction between the cautious, old *dictator*⁸⁰ and the ‘young’ fierce *consul*.⁸¹ However, though usually maintaining their fundamental character traits, in Silius they display an interesting convergence, occasionally suggesting the idea of a competitive emulation at work, if not that of an authorial attempt to ‘integrate’ their respective portraits by synthesizing qualities belonging to different ages and typologies of an ideal *dux*.⁸² The Delayer, the old protective father of his troops, the *pastor* preoccupied with their safety,

⁷⁸ A sort of inverted *deuotio*: the leader's life is the necessary condition that gives strength to an army. On acts of *deuotio* in the poem, see Marks (2005b).

⁷⁹ Cf. 14.183 and Fulvius at Capua 13.361–62.

⁸⁰ Perhaps exceptionally old; see above n. 35.

⁸¹ Not so young; see above n. 62.

⁸² So preparing the ground for the ‘eclectic’ character of the protagonist of the last three books: Scipio Africanus (Fucecchi [1993]; Marks [2005a]; but the *puer* Scipio already shows affinities with the *senex* Fabius: for instance, when enacting the Fabian ‘motto’ of *uincere seruando* at the Ticinus, in 4.459–77). For a traditional and still useful assessment of the *topos* of the *puer senex* in ancient and medieval literature, cf. Curtius (1953) 98–101.

at the right moment (thanks to the substantial help from Hercules, his mythical ancestor), is perfectly able to enter the fight and use the sword. On the other hand, the brave and aggressive Marcellus, whose youthful fierceness and ambition always make him eager to conquer the spoils of the opponent general, firmly keeps his soldiers' fury under restraint when entering the conquered Syracuse, thus showing his sensitivity to the sudden tragic reversal of human fortunes.

Nonetheless, as it is well known, Marcellus and Fabius do not actively participate in the last phase of the war, nor do they share in the glory of the final victory of Rome. The former, while attempting to catch Hannibal, unexpectedly falls victim to an ambush and, literally paralyzed by the horrible sight of his son dying, allows himself to be killed—a fatal (and unjustifiable) negligence which, however, Silius softens by contaminating traditional epic *Pathosformeln*, such as the ὄρφος-theme and the tragedy of the 'orphan-father.' The latter finally leaves the stage after an animated senatorial debate, where he has vainly opposed Scipio's plan to move the war onto African soil: in this case too, however, Silius removes every suspicion of Fabius' personal hostility or envy towards the young new leader; the Cunctator only appears to be the victim of his memorable *providentia*, of an excessive faithfulness to his own model of command and to an old-fashioned foreign policy.

The exemplary function of these two figures certainly remains untouched, until the younger Scipio—embodying a new, superior, model of military and political leadership, a marvelous synthesis of human and divine virtues—becomes finally ready to hold the reins. In the light of such considerations, Silius' choice to juxtapose the last appearances of Fabius (15.320–33) and Marcellus (15.334–98) and to frame them within the narrative of Scipio's Spanish campaign⁸³ assumes an emblematic meaning: it might be a peculiar way of illustrating how the modern, 'individualistic,' almost proto-imperial model⁸⁴ of charismatic power also is fashioned by assimilating itself to the best heritage of the past and by capitalizing on the examples of contemporary and, at the same time, 'ancient' heroes, such as Fabius and Marcellus.

⁸³ The conquest of New Carthage (15.200–85) and Hasdrubal's defeat (15.410–502); cf. Marks (2005a) 44–47; 76 and 95. Note also that, in these two enterprises, Scipio shows prowess and bravery, as well as strategic skill and shrewdness.

⁸⁴ Cf. Tipping's analysis and conclusions in this volume (215–18).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

FONS CUNCTI VARRO MALI: THE DEMAGOGUE VARRO IN *PUNICA* 8–10

Enrico M. Ariemma

1. *Two goddesses in aid of Hannibal*

The eighth book of the *Punica* exhibits a complex narrative strategy. The epic action comes to a halt, as if Silius has himself adopted Fabius' delaying tactics and has given them a metadiegetic role to play. They are thematized through the frequent use of the word *mora*, which encompasses a wide variety of connotations, such as the ability to camouflage oneself, to avoid engagement in open battle, or to control the impetuous desires of one's soldiers—a trait that shows Fabius to be a true paternal figure.¹ The poet also establishes a link between history and myth, yet does not simply trace the origins of the Punic conflict back to Dido's curse, as Virgil does. Silius opts for a more direct connection: Juno calls upon Anna, Dido's sister, who sailed to Latium and became a local goddess there, and asks her to spur Hannibal on by informing him that a reversal in Rome's battle tactics is coming.² At this point in the narrative, the Flavian poet inserts an excursus on Anna's flight from Carthage, her arrival in Italy, her encounter with Aeneas, Lavinia's jealousy, and Anna's subsequent apotheosis in the waters of the Numicius. Myth and history are then stitched together when Anna appears to Hannibal in a dream and the Carthaginian goes on to reinvigorate the morale of his men. Hannibal's words to his soldiers signal a kind of circularity in that they echo Juno's words to Anna and Anna's to the Carthaginian himself:

¹ On Fabius' paternal authority, see Bernstein in this volume (382–84).

² Silius also exploits a Virgilian episode from *Aen.* 12 (142–60), in which Juno exerts pressure on Juturna to intervene and come to Turnus' aid. On Anna in Silius, cf. also Dominik (2006), as well as Ganiban (91–96) and Keith (365–66) in this volume.

...Hannibal, a uestro nomen memorabile Belo.
 perge age et insanos curarum comprime fluctus.
 excute sollicito Fabium. sola ille Latinos
 sub iuga mittendi mora iam discingitur armis.
 cum Varrone manus et cum Varrone serenda
 proelia. ne desit fatis ad signa mouenda,
 ipsa adero. Tendat iamdudum in Iapyga campum.
 huc Trebiae rursum et Thrasymenni fata sequentur. (*Pun.* 8.31–38)³

Hannibal, a famous name, descended from your Belus. Arise, hasten, and assuage his raging sea of troubles. Dislodge Fabius from his mind. Fabius alone stands as a delay between the Romans and subjugation; but he is now putting off his armor, and Hannibal will have to fight against Varro and meet Varro in battle. Let him move his standards forward and take advantage of fortune. I myself shall be there. Let him march instantly to the plain of Iapygia. The doom of the Trebia and Lake Trasimene shall be repeated there.

The goddess dwells on the symptoms of a hero in crisis. Hannibal is close to springing to victory, just like Aeneas at the beginning of another eighth book, that of the *Aeneid*, though he more closely approximates Virgil's Turnus, in that he wakes up from his dream in an agitated state.⁴ He is *impatiens morae* (8.4), impatient with the delaying tactics by which Fabius constantly avoids facing him in open battle. But whereas in the seventh book the term *mora* is extensively thematized, being an ingredient of *cunctatio*, Juno's words now announce a decisive reversal, which is identified as such by an anti-epic act, the removal of armor (*discingitur armis*, 8.34), and by an anaphora followed by enjambment that underlines Varro's prominent role in the upcoming battle (*cum Varrone manus et cum Varrone serenda/proelia*, 8.35–36).

In this essay, I will demonstrate how Silius builds a portrait for the consul Varro that is both autonomous and at the same time contingent upon other characters in the *Punica*, such as Flaminius and Minucius. Complemented by intertextual references to Virgil's Drances and Lucan's Curio, among others, the poet activates a net of intratextual correspondences that render Varro as another Flaminius. His deft exploitation of the techniques of *praeteritio*, amplification, and rear-

³ I have used the following translations with modifications: for Silius, Duff (1934); for Lucan, Braund (1992); for Livy, Foster (1969); and for Virgil, West (1990); all other translations are my own.

⁴ On the association between Hannibal and Aeneas/Turnus, see Fernandelli (2006) 88–101.

rangement of the historical and epic sources enables Silius to portray Varro as an ‘insider’ Hannibal, the person who is going to be Rome’s worst enemy.

Let us now turn to Anna’s speech to Hannibal:

ille uirum coetu tum forte remotus ab omni
 incertus rerum euentus bellicue uolutans
 anxia ducebat uigili suspiria mente.⁵
 cui dea sic dictis curas solatur amicis:
 ‘quid tantum ulterius, rex o fortissime gentis
 Sidoniae, ducis cura aegrescente dolorem?
 omnis iam placata tibi manet ira deorum,
 omnis Agenoridis rediit fauor. eia age, segnes
 rumpe moras, rape Marmaricas in proelia uires.
 mutati fasces. iam bellum atque arma senatus
 ex inconsulto posuit Tirynthius heros,
 cumque alio tibi Flaminio sunt bella gerenda...’ (Pun. 8.207–18)

He, as it chanced, had banished all company of men from him; and pondering the uncertain issues of fortunes and war, he sighed in his perplexity, while his mind kept watch. Thus the goddess soothed his troubles with friendly speech: “ Mightiest ruler of the Phoenicians, why do you persist in nursing the great grief in sick anxiety? All the wrath of the gods against you has now been appeased, all their goodwill has come back to the children of Agenor. Rise up, then, without loitering or delay! Speed on the forces of Marmarica to battle! The consuls are changed. By the foolishness of the senate the heroic scion of Hercules has laid down his arms, and you have to fight against a second Flaminius...”

It is clear from this speech that Hannibal is facing a continuing crisis. Although Anna’s language shows some significant variations on that theme in comparison with Juno’s previous *Anrede*, her message similarly points to a change, indicating that a wind, favorable to Carthage’s fortunes, is blowing: the celestial *numina* are now well-disposed to Hannibal, a reversal of their prior relationship underlined by the phrase *placata manet* (8.213) and the anaphora *omnis.../omnis* (8.213–14), and the antithesis *ira.../fauor* (8.213–14). Anna’s advice recalls Mercury’s second address to Aeneas in Virgil (*heia age, rumpe moras*, “rise up without delay,” *Aen.* 4.569), but it also refers intratextually to *pelle moras* in *Pun.* 4.732, words that goaded Hannibal on after his success at the Trebia. This is not coincidental: after the victory at the Trebia, there

⁵ See Ariemma (2000a) 84–85 for the adoption of *mente* from Heidland (1898) 206, as opposed to *uoce* followed by Delz.

is the victory at Trasimene, and that success will be duplicated at Cannae because he will there profit from the (involuntary) contribution of a second Flaminius, namely, Varro. On more than one occasion, in fact, Livy indicates that enlightened political thinkers of the day saw Flaminius and Varro as more or less the same person or, rather, saw the one as the reincarnation of the other. Consider, for instance, Fabius' *admonitio* to Aemilius Paulus:

Ominis etiam tibi causa absit C. Flamini memoria. Tamen ille consul demum et in provincia et ad exercitum coepit furere: hic, priusquam peteret consulatum, deinde in petendo consulatu, nunc quoque consul, priusquam castra uideat aut hostem, insanit. (Liv. 22.39.6)

For the very omen's sake, let there be no remembrance of Gaius Flaminius! Yet he only began to rave when he had been made consul and was in his province and had joined his army; whereas Varro was mad before he sought the consulship, as he was thereafter during his canvass, and is now as consul, before he has ever beheld his camp or the enemy.

The identification of these two generals with one another also comes across in the contentious exchanges between the consuls Paulus and Varro before the battle at Cannae:⁶

Inde rursus sollicitari seditione militari ac discordia consulum Romana castra, cum Paulus Sempronique et Flamini temeritatem Varroni Varro speciosum timidis ac segnibus ducibus exemplum Fabium obiceret... (Liv. 22.44.5)

This caused the camp of the Romans to be once more the scene of strife amongst the soldiers and dissension between the consuls. Paulus cast in Varro's teeth the recklessness of Sempronius and Flaminius; Varro retorted that Fabius was a prominent example for timid and slothful generals...

This process of assimilation is also marked by means of the lexical choices. For example, the phrase *excussus mentem*, which is used of Flaminius before the battle at Trasimene (*Pun.* 5.54) and of Varro during the battle at Cannae (*Pun.* 9.651),⁷ shows just how close the attitudes of the two generals are. Their resemblance is clear even to Hannibal,

⁶ Cf. Vallet (1964) 708.

⁷ Cf. Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2534, with a few but important observations on the death of Flaminius. On the contrast between Varro and Paulus, see Tipping (2004).

who on the plain of Cannae recognizes Varro from his apparel and insignia, which remind him of Flaminius:

‘nosco pompam atque insignia nosco.
Flaminius modo talis’ ait. (Pun. 9.421–22)

“I recognize the state and the badges of a consul; even so looked Flaminius, not long ago,” he said.

The identification of these two careless generals also sets them apart from Fabius: Flaminius and Varro both have the temper of a *popularis*, whereas Fabius displays a calmness drawn from experience and wisdom acquired from age. Livy touches on these points in another passage, where Hannibal is preoccupied about the future after the re-establishment of the dictatorship in Rome:

ceterum tacita cura animum [scil. Hannibalis] incescit quod cum duce
haudquaquam Flamini Sempronique simili futura sibi res esset ac tum
demum edocti malis Romani parem Hannibali ducem quaesissent.
(Liv. 22.12.5)

But a silent trouble entered the heart of Hannibal that he would have a general to deal with by no means like Flaminius or Sempronius, since the Romans, schooled by their misfortunes, had now at last sought out a leader to match Hannibal.

On the eve of the battle at Trasimene, Juno herself appears to Hannibal to remove any hesitation on his part; Trasimene is a critical moment in accelerating the war to the Carthaginians’ advantage. The setting of this appearance anticipates the one in the eighth book, each instilling in Hannibal the *subitae curae* necessary to arouse him from his sedentary *quies*. There is no time to slow down the course of the fates; it is time to do away with all delay:

...cum Iuno in stagni numen conuersa propinqui
et madidae frontes crines circumdata fronde
populea stimulat subitis praecordia curis
ac rumpit ducis haud spernenda uoce quietem:
‘o felix famae et Latio lacrimabile nomen
Hannibal, Ausonia si te fortuna creasset
ad magnos uenture deos, cur fata tenemus?
pelle moras...’ (Pun. 4.725–32)

...when Juno, counterfeiting the deity of the neighboring lake, appeared before him, the hair on the dripping brow crowned with poplar leaves. She stirred the general’s heart with sudden anxiety, and broke his sleep with a voice he could not disregard. “Hannibal—a glorious name,

though a cause of tears to Latium—had Fortune made you a Roman, you would have joined the ranks of high gods. But why do we arrest the course of destiny? Make haste!...”

A similar, yet more complex form of interference occurs at the beginning of book 7, when the prisoner Cilnius, a noble from Aretium, addresses Hannibal. While emphasizing Fabius’ heroic pedigree, Cilnius pejoratively equates Flaminius with Gracchus and then contrasts them to the *gens Fabia*:⁸

‘non cum Flaminio tibi res, nec feruida Gracchi
in manibus consulta’ inquit; ‘Tirynthia gens est,
quam si fata tuis genuissent, Hannibal, oris,
terrarum imperium Carthaginis arce uideres...’ (Pun. 7.34–37)

“You do not have now to do with a Flaminius or a hot-headed Gracchus. Hercules is the ancestor of his house; and if Fate had made them your countrymen, Hannibal, you would have seen Carthage mistress of the world...”

The use of *consulta* (7.35) in emphatic hyperbaton with *feruida* (7.34) strikingly points to the irresponsible and demagogic behavior of the *populares*.⁹ Yet whereas Anna strives to show how the change in leadership from Fabius to Varro is injurious to Rome, Cilnius’ pronouncement makes it clear that the Roman state is now safer for having moved on from Flaminius to Fabius.

It comes as no surprise at this point that when Hannibal, now renewed in courage and determination, harangues his soldiers, he appropriates Juno’s and Anna’s arguments, though he varies them to suit his own point of view:

haec fatus socios stimulat tumefactus ouantes:
‘pone graues curas tormentaue lenta sedendi,
fatalis Latio miles. placuimus iras
caelicolum; redeunt diui. finita maligno
hinc Fabio imperia et mutatos consule fasces
nuntio...’ (Pun. 8.232–37)

Thus he spoke and swollen with pride encouraged his triumphant comrades: “Soldiers, messengers of death to Latium, here is an end to heavy

⁸ On the Cilnius episode, see Fernandelli (2006) 80–88 on Silius’ use of *Aen.* 2, as well as Klaassen in this volume (104).

⁹ Compare Anna’s colorful pun, *senatus... ex inconsulto* (8.216–17), which stigmatizes the misguidedness of Roman politics and constitutes still another textual link between these protagonists.

hearts and the lingering torture of inaction. We have appeased the anger of the gods, and they turn again to us. I announce to you that the command of Fabius, the pettifogger, is now at an end, and that the rods are borne before a new consul...”

The phrase *mutatos consule fasces* (236), which elaborates on *finita maligno... Fabio imperia* (235–36), reproduces to the letter the phraseology used by Anna and thus makes Hannibal look like a ventriloquist (after serving as Juno’s mannequin,¹⁰ so to speak). An example of intradiegetic adjustment is the alteration of groups of words and phrases used by Hannibal in the passage above from a description earlier in the book concerning the Carthaginian’s impatience when confronted with Fabius’ delaying tactics:

lentando feruida bella
dictator cum multa adeo, tum miles egenus
cunctarum ut rerum Tyrius foret, arte sedendi
egerat... (Pun. 8.11–14)

By skillful inaction and by slackening the pace of war, the Dictator had effected much; and, above all, he had deprived the Tyrian army of all supplies...

That Hannibal’s recovered confidence is a diegetically important element becomes clear from its recasting as a *monimentum* in the Satricus episode at the beginning of the ninth book. In this episode, Satricus is fatally wounded by his son Solymus because of a tragic mistake. While dying, he points to the good Fabian tactics have done (*producere bellum*, 9.135) and advises that Varro be held in check (*cohibete furentem Varronem*, 9.138–39):¹¹

...producere bellum
nitatur Poenoque neget certamina Martis.
augurio exsultat diuum immensamque propinqua
stragem acie sperat. quaeso, cohibete furentem
Varronem; namque hunc fama est impellere signa. (Pun. 9.135–39)

...he must strive to prolong the war and give Hannibal no chance of battle. Hannibal, overjoyed by the divine omens, hopes for an immediate engagement and immeasurable slaughter. Restrain, I entreat, Varro’s madness; for it is said that he is urging his standards on.

¹⁰ Hardie (1993a) 64.

¹¹ On the episode, see Fucecchi (1999).

Furthermore, the poet has Varro himself voice his disdain for the authority of omens and prodigies, when at the end of the Satricus episode he mocks Paulus for being womanly because he is the only one who fears the warning *fuge proelia* ("avoid the battle," 9.175) that was written by the bloody hand of dying Solymus, who, after his father's death, killed himself. This *omen* reproduces the *mandata patris* ("the father's message," 9.175), but according to Varro should be disregarded because of the impious circumstances under which it was produced:

'ferte haec' ait 'omina Paulo.
namque illum, cui femineo stant corde timores,
mouerit ista manus, quae caede imbuta nefanda,
cum Furiae expeterent poenas, fortasse paterno
signauit moriens sceleratum sanguine carmen.'

(Pun. 9.262–66)

He said: "Carry these omens to Paulus; for he, whose womanish heart is filled with fears, may be affected by that parricidal hand, which, when the avenging Furies came, perhaps used his father's blood to write that infamous dying message."

In line with Satricus' appeal is that of Fabius himself, who in the previous book urges Paulus to take into account the recent turn of events: the army is ready and is only waiting for the appearance of another Flaminius, that is, Varro, who is apostrophized (*in absentia?*) in a sudden change of addressee:

...expectaturque sub ictu
alter Flaminius. quantos insane ciebis
Varro uiros! tu (pro superi!) tu protinus arma,
tu campum, noscas ante exploresque trahendo
quam ritus hostis. tu non, quae copia rerum,
quae natura locis, quod sit, rimabere sollers,
armorum genus, et stantem super omnia tela
Fortunam adspicies.

(Pun. 8.309–16)

...and is waiting, ready to attack,¹² for a second Flaminius. What mighty opponents will you rouse, Varro! You—God help us!—shall know the weapons right away, the battleground at your leisure, before you examine the ways of the enemy. You have no skill to investigate his supplies or the strength of his position or his method of warfare; you will not keep an eye on fortune which matters more than any weapon.

¹² On *sub ictu*, cf. *TLL* VII.171 as *ab hoste ad ictum parato* ("by an enemy ready to attack"); cf. *Pun.* 4.42 and 5.46, as well as *Liv.* 28.30.8.

Varro's madness is reflected in stylistic elements in these lines: *noscas* (312) is in a prominent position, in anastrophe with *ante...quam* (312–13), by which it is governed; *antequam* itself is in tmesis and enjambment, separating *noscas*—theoretical knowledge—from *explores*—empirical knowledge. What Varro lacks is expressed by the gerund *trahendo* (which in 7.272–73, by the way, is used for the 'correct' Fabian tactics: *donec reptantem et nequiquam saepe trahentem/huc illuc castra ac scrutantem proelia Poenum*, "until Hannibal crept about, often shifting his camp without result and spying out any chance of battle") and by the rare occurrence of the verb *rimor* (*rimabere*), which conveys a sense of thorough investigation, quite foreign to the rashness of the consul.¹³ In closing, Fabius deliberately accumulates phrases that allude to his own, highly regarded tactics:

persta et cauti medicamina belli
lentus ama. (*Pun.* 8.324–25)

Persevere, and keep to the cautious methods that alone can heal the wounds of war.

The imperative *persta* (324) is forward-looking; for at the beginning of the ninth book this command will be followed, when Paulus tries to reach some agreement with his colleague Varro. In that address, Paulus once again praises the tactical approach of the *cunctator* Fabius, who in Varro's opinion (*ut rere*, 9.53) is *aeger* (9.52). But what makes the entire oration particularly relevant is that it evokes the function of the negative model of Flaminius, who ominously looms over the passage. Note, in particular, the aposiopesis and the invocation of the gods in line 55:

...cunctator et aeger,
ut rere, in pugnas Fabius quotcumque sub illis
culpatis duxit signis, nunc arma capessunt.
at quos Flaminius—sed dira auertite, diui!...
nec Graio posthac Diomede ferentur,
sed te, si perstas, insignes consule campi. (*Pun.* 9.52–55, 63–64)

...Fabius is a sick man and a dawdler, as you think; but every soldier whom he led to battle beneath the standards you blame is in the ranks to-day, whereas the troops of Flaminius—but may the gods avert the evil omen!...And this field shall no longer be famous because of Diomedes the Greek but if you continue, because of you, the Roman consul.

¹³ The verb occurs in *Pun.* 12.66 and 17.518 together with *lustrō*.

The operative distinction here is one that is central to Fabius' ideology of delay and one that the *Cunctator* himself formulated in the seventh book. In a speech to his troops, he contrasts the wisdom of his own choice of tactics with Flaminius' impulsive urge to engage in pitched battle. Fighting may make the name of the battlefield famous, but at the costly price of defeat, and for Fabius that is pure folly; whoever wishes to die fighting ought to recall Flaminius from the dead:

nulli per Fabium e uobis cecidisse licebit.
 si lucis piget et supremis esse cupido est
 nominis Ausonii taedetque in tempore tali
 nullum clade noua claraeque fragore ruinae
 insignem fecisse locum, reuocandus ab atris
 Flaminius nobis est sedibus. ille ruendi
 iam dudum properans signum auspiciumque dedisset. (*Pun.* 7.225–31)

Not one of you shall be allowed to perish, if I, Fabius, can help it. If you are tired of life and wish to be the last bearers of the Roman name, and if at this crisis you are not content unless you have made some spot famous for fresh disaster and resounding defeat, then we must call Flaminius back from the realm of darkness. Long ago in haste, he would have given the order and the signal to attack.

It is clear, therefore, that there is an ideological relationship between moderation, cautious tactics, and conservative policies on the one hand and rashness, extremism, and demagoguery on the other. The eighth book is carefully designed to foreground such distinctions through a sequence of episodes that involve human and divine levels of action, the Roman and Carthaginian sides, reality and supernatural prodigies, all of which lead up to the defeat at Cannae, the centripetal event of the poem.¹⁴ In fact, already in the entire so-called "second portrait" of Fabius, given by Jupiter, the *populares* are evoked antiphrastically: they seduce the people with flattery and deceptive promises and incite hatred against whoever does not covet spoils and refrains from other types of demagogical behavior:

'non hunc' inquit 'superauerit umquam
 inuidia aut blando popularis gloria fuco,
 non astus fallax, non praeda aliusue cupido...' (*Pun.* 6.613–15)

¹⁴ See Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2505.

He said: “This man will never yield to jealousy or the sweet poison of popular applause; he will be proof against artful devices and desire of plunder and all other passions...”

But Jupiter is opposed by Juno: Minucius becomes Fabius’ associate as the *magister equitum*, when goddess exploits the senate’s demagogical sympathies and turns them against the *dictator*.¹⁵

necnon patrum Saturnia mentes
inuidiae stimulo fodit et popularibus auris. (Pun. 7.511–12)

Likewise the daughter of Saturn stirred up the hearts of the senate with the sting of jealousy and with the desire for popular favor.

After Minucius, there could only be a Varro, and the senate’s careless decision to make Minucius *magister equitum* is better understood, therefore, in connection with Varro’s later election to the consulship. In fact, the passage in *Punica* 7, cited above, is reminiscent of Livy’s description of Varro’s rapid political ascent:

...iam ad consulatus spem cum attolleret animos, haud parum callide
auram fauoris popularis ex dictatoriali inuidia petit scitique plebis unus
gratiam tulit. (Liv. 22.26.4)

...He now ventured to aspire to the consulship and with considerable shrewdness sought to capture the favor of the people, by exploiting their animosity against the dictator, with the result that he alone reaped all the popularity growing out of the plebs.

But it is in a portrait of Varro in book 8 where the negative aspects of demagoguery are especially concentrated:

...subnixus raptō plebei muneris ostro
sacuit iam rostris Varro ingentique ruinae
festinans aperire locum fata admouet urbi.
atque illi sine luce genus surdumque parentum
nomen, at immodice uibrabat in ore canoro
lingua procax. hinc auctus opes largusque rapinae,
infima dum uolgi fouet oblatratque senatum
tantum in quassata bellis caput extulit urbe,
momentum ut rerum et fati foret arbiter unus,
quo conseruari Latium uictore pueret.
hunc Fabios inter sacrataque nomina Marti
Scipiadas interque Ioui spolia alta ferentem

¹⁵ Cf. Liv 22.26.4. See also Bernstein in this volume (382–83).

Marcellum fastis labem suffragia caeca
 addiderant, Cannasque malum exitiale fouebat
 ambitus et Graio funestior aequore campus.
 idem, ut turbarum sator atque accendere sollers
 inuidiam prauusque togae, sic debilis arte
 belligera Martemque rudis uersare nec ullo
 spectatus ferro, lingua sperabat adire
 ad dextrae decus atque e rostris bella ciebat. (*Pun.* 8.243–62)

Meanwhile Varro, relying on the purple that he had seized by gift of the people, was already ranting on the Rostra, and, by his haste to prepare the way of a mighty downfall, brought Rome near to destruction. His birth was obscure; the name of his ancestors was never heard; but his impudent tongue wagged unceasingly, and his voice was loud. Thus he got wealth and was liberal with his plunder; and so, by courting the dregs of the people and railing at the senate, he rose so high in the war-stricken city that he alone could turn the scale of events and settle the course of destiny, though Italy might blush to owe even victory and safety to such a man. Blind voters had given to him, that blot upon the calendar records, a place among such men as Fabius, the Scipios, whose names are sacred to Mars, and Marcellus, who presented his glorious spoils to Jupiter. The destruction of Cannae was due to bribery, and to the Field of Mars, more fatal than the field of Diomedes. Also, though a bad citizen, skillful to stir up trouble and kindle hatred, he was helpless in the field, unpracticed in the conduct of war, and not approved by any deed of valor; but he hoped to gain martial glory by his tongue and sounded the war-cry from the Rostra.

In an authoritative, objective voice, the narrator underlines the centrality of the Cannae episode, the heart of the *Punica*: the election of the demagogue Varro is the result of a degenerative process in its incipient phase, which will eventually lead to the civil wars.¹⁶ If Varro reaches the same political stature as Marcellus and the Scipios, then one must assume that the political status quo has been fundamentally perverted. And whereas Fabius ensures unity among segments of Roman society (*concoro miles*, “united army,” 8.8), Varro is figured as a symbol of dissidence and internal strife. This is a *malum exitiale*, and *exitiale* is a word pregnant with allusive signification, often used in contexts of ambiguity in Flavian epic.¹⁷ As one can see from questions

¹⁶ See McGuire (1997) 126–27; Dominik (2003) 492–93 and (2006) 119–21.

¹⁷ On its use from Seneca to Statius and Silius, see Ariemma (2008) 349–50.

raised about his candidacy in Livy, Varro is a man of the plebs,¹⁸ the product of long service in the lowest ranks of the *populares*: he is a complex amalgam of unscrupulous methods, used to defame the *boni* and to obtain the consensus of the riled masses.

Moreover, this passage evokes a Lucanian passage, as Fucecchi has pointed out, the well-known exchange of views between Cicero and Pompey on the eve of the battle of Pharsalus.¹⁹ Lucan insists, as one might expect, on the exceptional eloquence of the orator and suggests that it is not matched by an equivalent competence in military affairs. *Saeuit iam rostris* (244), used of Varro, indicates that he practices a rabid, uncouth form of eloquence in the service of a dangerous and misguided cause; the phrase seems to have antecedents in Lucan. Lucan's text also serves as a structural model for the entire series of conflicts between Varro and Aemilius Paulus, which bridge the end of book 8 and the beginning of book 9:

cunctorum uoces Romani maximus auctor
Tullius eloquii, cuius sub iure togaque
pacificas saeuus tremuit Catilina securis,
pertulit iratus bellis, cum rostra forumque
optaret passus tam longa silentia miles.
addidit inualidae robur facundia causae. (Luc. 7.62–67)

The utterances of all were conveyed by the greatest master of Roman eloquence, Tullius—under his civilian authority fierce Catiline had trembled at peace-making Axes. He was enraged at warfare, because he had longed for the Rostra and the Forum, after enduring silence so long as a soldier. His eloquence gave strength to their feeble cause.

Silius has performed, as one can see, a kind of syncretic operation on Lucan's text: he combines Lucan's adjective *saeuus* (scil. *Catilina*) and noun *rostra* (which in hendiadys refers to the *forum*, Cicero's proper

¹⁸ Livy insists on Varro's low origins:

C. Terentius Varro... loco non humili solum sed etiam sordido ortus. Patrem lanium fuisse ferunt, ipsum institorem mercis, filioque hoc ipso in seruilia eius artis ministeria usum. (Liv. 22.25.18–19)

Gaius Terentius Varro... whose antecedents were not merely base but even sordid. It is said that his father had been a butcher, who peddled his wares himself, and that he had employed this very son about the menial tasks associated with that calling.

¹⁹ Fucecchi (1999) 327 and Narducci (2002) 299.

sphere of influence) and then applies it to Varro: *saeuit iam rostris*.²⁰ Cicero shares with Varro the curious trait of warmonger, who can use his eloquence to make the weaker cause the stronger (the interference of *inualidae robur* in the syntax of line 67 conveys this point well).

Varro is even another Aeneas, albeit an unorthodox one, the kind of Aeneas-Paris whom Juba in the *Aeneid* regards as an effeminate usurper:

et nunc ille Paris cum semiuiro comitatu,
Maeonia mentum mitra crinemque madentem
subnixus, raptō potitur... (*Aen.* 4.215–17)

And now this second Paris, with eunuchs in attendance and hair dripping with perfume and Maeonian bonnet tied under his chin, is enjoying what he has stolen...

Visual and aural effects combine to reinforce the impression of Varro's obscure, low birth (*sine luce genus surdumque parentum/nomen*, *Pun.* 8.246–47), and the obscurity of his origins is further underscored by contrast with those of Paulus, who traces his descent back to Amulius and by that route to Assaracus and Jupiter (a Silian innovation that renders Paulus' heroism exemplary). Varro is not an isolated example in the *Punica* in book 11: when formulating the unacceptable proposal of an alternate consulship, the Capuans, Pacuvius and Virrius, appear as negative characters on account of their obscurity of origins:

nec, quos uile genus despectaque lucis origo
foedabat, sperare sibi et deposcere primi
derant imperia ac patriae pereuntis habenas...
—Pacuiuio fuit haud obscurum crimine nomen—...
antistat cunctis praecellens Virrius ore
sed genus obscurum nullique furore secundus.
(*Pun.* 11.48–50, 58, 65–66)

Men notorious of humble birth and obscure origin asserted their claims, expecting and demanding to hold office before others, and to rule the sinking state... Pacuvius had a name known only for his misdeeds... Their chief was Virrius, an eloquent speaker but a man of low origin and second to none in violence.

²⁰ On the precedents in Lucretius and Virgil in Lucan, see Narducci (2002) 359 with further bibliography.

2. *Between Drances and Curio*

An epic archetype of the tyrannical demagogue is Virgil's Drances. Consider the following portrait of him in the *Aeneid*:²¹

tum Drances idem infensus, quem gloria Turni
obliqua invidia stimulisque agitabat amaris,
largus opum et lingua melior, sed frigida bello
dextera, consiliis habitus non futilis auctor,
seditione potens (genus huic materna superbum
nobilitas dabat, incertum de patre ferebat),
surgit et his onerat dictis atque aggerat iras... (Aen. 11.336–42)

Then rises Drances, hostile as ever, who always looked askance at Turnus' great reputation and was goaded by bitter jealousy. He was generous with his wealth and readier still with his tongue, but his hand did not warm to battle. His voice had some weight in council and was always a force for discord. His mother's breeding gave him pride of rank; his father's origins were unknown. With these words he adds force and substance to their anger...

An important difference here is the nobility of Drances' maternal side; and yet the obscurity of his father's lineage brings him closer to the people, whose needs and temperament he knows well and therefore can manipulate. Drances' oratorical skills, however, do not match his warlike actions, a detail that Turnus exploits in his own accusations:

an tibi Mauors
uentosa in lingua pedibusque fugacibus istis
semper erit? (Aen. 11.389–91)

Or will Mars always be in that long tongue and nimble feet of yours?

As La Penna has demonstrated, Thersitic cowardice is combined with a negative view of individuals whose eloquence surpasses their achievements in war. Such a view is found in the prefaces of Sallust's two monographs as well as in the spurious *Epistle to Caesar* and *Invective Against Cicero*. The motif of generosity also touches on demagogical politics in that it bespeaks a munificence derived from the irresponsible seizure and distribution of property and wealth. Note that the Virgilian phrase *largus opum* is reproduced by Silius as *auctus opes* (8.248), to which is added the epexegetical *largus rapinae*, and that Varro's patrimony increases through his associations with extreme elements in the

²¹ La Penna (1991) 113–18 and 130–33; cf. also Bruère (1971) 30–32.

plebs (hinc), who plunder the wealth of others. This aspect of Varro's character also identifies him, however, with Sallust's Catiline:

huic ab adulescentia bella intestina, caedes, rapinae, discordia ciuilis grata
fuere. (Cat. 5.2)

From his youth he rejoiced in civil wars, slaughter, pillage, and political dissension.

In examining the causes of the people's inclination toward political upheaval, Sallust offers a ruthless analysis of the ascent of demagogues to power, in particular after the restoration of tribunician power during the consulships of Pompey and Crassus:

homines adulescentes summam potestatem nacti, quibus aetas animusque ferox erat, coepere senatum criminando plebem exagitare, dein largiundo atque pollicitando plebem incendere, ita ipsi clari potentesque fieri. (Cat. 38.1)

Young men attained the highest authority, whose age and character were aggressive, and they began to excite the people by attacking the senate, then to inflame the plebs by giving out money and promises, and thus they themselves became famous and powerful.

Between Drances and Varro there is, therefore, a connection whose relevance is difficult to underestimate.

Another epic predecessor is Lucan's Curio, who in the first book of *De bello ciuili* is portrayed in no uncertain terms as a demagogue:

hos iam mota ducis uicinaque signa petentes
audax uenali comitatur Curio lingua,
uox quondam populi libertatemque tueri
ausus et armatos plebi miscere potentes. (Luc. 1.268–71)

As they headed for their leader's standards, now brought close to Rome, with them came the reckless Curio and his mercenary tongue—once the people's voice, he dared to champion liberty, to level with the people armed grandees.

Not only does Curio's *uenalis lingua* adhere to a code of demagogical behavior (one is reminded of Lucan's epitaph for Curio at the end of the fourth book: *emere omnes, hic uendidit urbem*, "they all bought, but he sold Rome," Luc. 4.824),²² but it also informs the poet's assessment of

²² On Curio, see Esposito (2000) and (2009) *ad loc.*

Curio's dubious contribution to Rome and the ultimate cause of his demise:

Quid nunc rostra tibi prosunt turbata forumque
unde tribunicia plebeius signifer arce
arma dabas populis? quid prodita iura senatus
et gener atque socer bello concurrere iussi? (Luc. 4.799–802)

What help to you now is the Forum and the Rostra disturbed, the tribune's citadel from which you, the standard-bearer of the plebs, gave weapons to the people? What help the senate's rights betrayed and father- and son-in-law bidden join in battle?

Varro's eloquence is decidedly aggressive: *oblatrat...senatum* (8.249) anticipates a brief, introductory portrait of Paulus later in book 8, in which we learn of a defamatory campaign against him, orchestrated by his adversaries in collaboration with the *plebs*:

cernebat Paulus (namque huic communia Campus
iura atque arma tulit) labi mergente sinistro
consule res pessumque dari; sed mobilis ira est
turbati uulgi, signataque mente cicatrix
undantes aegro frenabat corde dolores. (Pun. 8.284–88)

Paulus, to whom the voters had given equal power and authority with Varro, saw that the state was rushing on to ruin, destroyed by the ill-omened consul. But the anger of a turbulent mob is easily stirred; and the scar of an ancient wrong, imprinted on his memory, checked the wave of resentment in his troubled breast.

In Silius' narrative, Varro himself does not hesitate to remind his prudent colleague how much he owes to the people for having escaped severe punishment in the past:²³

'sicine, sic' inquit 'grates pretiumque rependis,
Paule, tui capitis? meruerunt talia, qui te
legibus atque urnae dira eripere minanti?...' (Pun. 9.25–27)

He said: "Is this the way, Paulus, you show gratitude and repay me for saving your life? Is this the reward of those who rescued you from the laws and from a jury that meant mischief?..."

Silius' language betrays a negative assessment of Varro: the juxtaposition of *fastis labem* (8.255) sets the new consul among, yet also apart from the catalogue of former consuls, Fabius, the Scipios, Marcellus,

²³ Cf. Liv. 27.34 and *Pun.* 15.594–98.

while the phrase *suffragia caeca*, which follows, underlines the people's folly in supporting him. Varro's name is tellingly expunged from the consular list given in Jupiter's speech in book 3, when the god reassures Venus about the future destiny of Rome and names Marcellus, Paulus (the internal enemy of Varro), and Fabius Maximus:²⁴

iamque tibi ueniet tempus quo maxima rerum
nobilior sit Roma malis. hinc nomina nostro
non indigna polo referet labor, hinc tibi Paulus,
hinc Fabius gratusque mihi Marcellus opimis.
hi tantum parient Latio per uulnera regnum
quod luxu et multum mutata mente nepotes
non tamen euertisse queant. (Pun. 3.584–90)

You shall see a time come, when Rome, mistress of the world, shall be more glorious for her calamities. Thus suffering shall produce famous men, worthy to dwell with us in heaven; you shall see a Paulus, a Fabius, and a Marcellus who has pleased me with honorable spoils. These men, by their defeats, will gain for Latium an empire so great, that their descendants will be unable to overthrow it, for all their luxury and degenerate hearts.

Varro represents the internal counterpart to Hannibal and at moments seems to duplicate the enemy's traits. Along these lines it is notable that Livy stresses the perverse outcome of the consular elections, which bring to prominence two diametrically opposite colleagues:

Is proximo comitali die concedentibus omnibus, qui cum Varrone certauerant, par magis in aduersandum quam collega datur consuli.
(Liv. 22.35.4)

On the next election day, all those who had been Varro's rivals withdrew their names, the consul was given Paulus, rather as a competent opponent than as a colleague.

The most revealing passage, however, comes in Fabius' speech in Livy, where the *Cunctator* stresses the absence of common ground between the two consuls: if they were united in purpose, he would not need to address them. The apparent disparity between the two authorizes Fabius to point out, in the form of an *admonitio*, the danger of there being an *alter Hannibal* among them:

²⁴ On this passage, see Ariemma (forthcoming).

Si aut collegam, id quod mallet, tui similem, L. Aemili, haberes aut tu collegae tui esses similis, superuacanea esset oratio mea; nam et duo boni consules, etiam me indicente, omnia e re publica fide uestra faceretis, et mali nec mea uerba auribus uestris nec consilia animis acciperetis. Nunc et collegam tuum et te talem uirum intuenti mihi tecum omnis oratio est, quem uideo nequiquam et uirum bonum et ciuem fore, si altera parte claudente re publica malis consiliis idem ac bonis iuris et potestatis erit. Erras enim, L. Paule, si tibi minus certaminis cum C. Terentio quam cum Hannibale futurum censes; nescio an infestior hic aduersarius quam ille hostis maneat; cum illo in acie tantum, cum hoc omnibus locis ac temporibus certaturus es; aduersus Hannibalem legionesque eius tuis equitibus ac peditibus pugnandum tibi est, Varro dux tuis militibus te est oppugnaturus. (Liv. 22.39.1–5)

If either, Lucius Aemilius, you had, as I should prefer, a colleague like yourself, or if you were like your colleague, my words would be superfluous. For, as two good consuls, even if I held my peace, you would act in all respects in accordance with the public interest and your own loyalty; and, as bad ones, you would neither take my words into your ears nor my advice into your hearts. As it is, when I see what your colleague is like and what you are like, it is to you alone that I must address myself: though I perceive that you will be a good man and good citizen to little purpose, if the state is lame on the other side and evil counsels enjoy the same rights and the same authority as good. For you err, Lucius Paulus, if you suppose that your struggle will be less with Gaius Terentius than with Hannibal. I am not sure that you may not find the one more dangerous than the other as an enemy, and that with your enemy you will have to contend only in battle; with your opponent, everywhere and at all times. Against Hannibal and his legions you will have your cavalry and infantry to fight for you: when Varro takes the field, it will be to attack you with your own soldiers.

Turbarum sator (8.258) underscores a point of contact between Varro and Hannibal; the phrase is a variation of *litis sator*, which Livy uses to describe Hannibal's provocation against Saguntum (21.6.2). Reintroducing the theme of *inuidia* (8.259) also invites the reader to interpret and contrast its use intratextually; for Varro is able to excite *inuidia* by virtue of his oratorical powers (*prauus togae*, 8.259), a counterpoint to Fabius' ability to avoid the effects of *inuidia*, as Jupiter claims, notwithstanding Juno's efforts to the contrary: '*non hunc*' inquit '*superauerit umquam/inuidia aut blando popularis gloria fuco* (6.613–14); *necnon patrum Saturnia mentes/inuidiae stimulo fodit et popularibus auris* (7.511–12). As we see, in both cases the negative Begriff (*inuidia*) is explained by being coupled with a clearly specified faction (*popularis gloria*, in the first instance, *popularis aura* in the second). Similarly, a brachylogy, such as

prauus togae, activates a complex nexus of references. Compare, for example, when Aemilius Paulus, the ideological antithesis of Varro, laments the people's unthinking attachment to him:

heu patria, heu plebes scelerata et praua fauoris! (Pun. 9.636)

Alas for our country, alas for our people who in their wickedness bestow their favor amiss!

The idea of partiality implicit in *prauus togae* plays off against the balanced idea of *par ingenium castrisque togaeque*, which Jupiter ascribes to the calm, all-embracing ability of the *dictator* Fabius. In addition, Varro's agitated and animated speech directly associates him with Hannibal:

ergo alacer Fabiumque morae increpitare professus
ad uulgom in patres ut ouantia uerba ferebat... (Pun. 8.263–64)

Therefore, he bestirred himself; and professing to blame Fabius for delay, he attacked the senate in a speech to the people, as if he were already victorious...

Like Hannibal, as we saw in the speeches of Juno and Anna, Varro is now *impatiens morae*, whereas Fabius represents delay. This is further evidence of the identification of Varro with the Carthaginian general and of the doubling of enemies, one of whom resides in a Rome that is still anchored by the values of *patientia*. Varro is, therefore, at the service of Hannibal: this constitutes another stitch between mythical and historical time that helps us understand how and why an indigent Roman goddess, like Anna, who is expected by the reader to support the Roman cause, rather strives to subvert it; in both mythical and historical terms, then, Rome is her own worst enemy. This view coheres with the complex series of links that have been identified in the *Punica* between the events of the Second Punic War and the civil wars of the first century BC and AD.²⁵

3. *The demagogue at work: Fragments of eloquence*

Varro's speech exhibits, from the start, a demagogical point of view. First of all, there is the *captatio beneuolentiae*, which equates consular with

²⁵ See McGuire (1997) 129.

popular authority and in doing so sidesteps conflict between these institutions; the people will determine policy by their acclamation:

uos, quorum imperium est, consul praecepta modumque
bellandi posco. sedeone aut montibus erro,
dum mecum Garamas et adustus corpora Maurus
diuidit Italiam? an ferro, quo cingitis, utor? ... (Pun. 8.265–68)

The supreme power is yours, and from you I, the consul, ask directions for the conduct of the war. Am I to do nothing, or to move from height to height, while Garamantians and dark-skinned Moors share Italy with me, or am I to use the sword which you gird about me? ...

Varro's words foreground the divide that separates his approach from Fabius': Varro moves from the "I" in *sedeo*... *mecum* (266) to the "You" in *cingitis* (268) and thereby coopts the people into his own criminal designs after asking them for their support and approval. The passage should also be read in connection with a passage in book 7, in which Fabius chooses the opposite strategy, prudently preferring to wait in the hills and mountains:

Cassarum sedet irarum spectator et alti
celsus colle iugi domat exsultantia corda
infractasque minas dilato Marte fatigat
sollers cunctandi Fabius... (Pun. 7.123–26)

Fabius sat and watched this fruitless rage from a lofty mountain-top; by refusing battle he tamed their proud hearts and wore out their baffled boasting by masterly delay...

Hannibal, though, is still a significant intratextual referent for Varro. In the third book, when Hannibal sends his wife Imilce back to Carthage, he justifies the Herculean labor before himself by contrasting it with the alternative of inactivity (*perpetiar*...*sedeam*).²⁶ Hannibal uses language that Varro uses in book 8 (*sedeam* ~ *sedeo*):

an Romana iuga et famulas Carthaginis arces
perpetiar? stimulant manes noctisque per umbras
increpitans genitor, stant arae atque horrida sacra
ante oculos, breuitasque uetat mutabilis horae
prolatare diem. sedeamne, ut nouerit una
me tantum Carthago...? (Pun. 3.138–43)

²⁶ On the Herculean elements of the third book, see Augoustakis (2003a); Gibson (2005); Moretti (2005); Ariemma (2007) 18; and Asso in this volume (187–92).

Or shall I endure the yoke of Rome and not resent the slavery of Carthage? I am driven on by the spirit of my father that rebukes me in the darkness of night; that altar and that dreadful sacrifice stand clear before my sight; and my brief and changeable span forbids me to defer the date. Am I to sit still, in order that Carthage alone may know my name?

Moreover, Varro's condemnation of Fabian delay follows faithfully the substance of Minucius', when the *magister equitum* becomes irritated at the inaction of this *novus Camillus*.²⁷ In Livy, Minucius argues that Fabius' *cunctatio* makes the dictator resemble Hannibal, which, from the perspective of the *populares* at least, is a sign of Rome's ethical and tactical decline:

Degeneramus a patribus nostris ut, praeter quam oram illi Punicas uagari classes dedecus esse imperii sui duxerint, eam nunc plenam hostium Numidarumque ac Maurorum iam factam uideamus? ... Si hoc modo peragrando cacumina saltusque M. Furius recipere a Gallis urbem uoluisset, quo hic novus Camillus, nobis dictator unicus in rebus adfectis quaesitus, Italiam ab Hannibale recipere parat, Gallorum Roma esset, quam uereor ne sic cunctantibus nobis Hannibali ac Poenis totiens seruauerint maiores nostri. (Liv. 22.14.6, 9–10)

Do we degenerate from our fathers that we behold overrun with enemies and in the possession of Numidians and Moors that coast past which *they* could not see the Punic navies cruising without feeling that their empire was disgraced? ... If Marcus Furius had tried to recover Rome from the Gauls by wandering thus over mountain heights and passes, even as this new Camillus, this wonderful dictator to whom we have turned in our distress, is planning to recover Italy from Hannibal, the Gauls would be in Rome today; and I fear if we linger thus, our father will so often have preserved it only for Hannibal and the Phoenicians.

In Varro's speech, the apostrophe to the *bonus dictator*, occasioned by a sudden change of addressee, betrays a tone of ironic loftiness, which is punctuated from the beginning by the spondaic rhythm of the imperative *exaudi*:

‘...exaudi, bone dictator, quid Martia plebes
imperitet: pelli Libyas Romamque leuari
hoste iubent. num festinant, quos plurima passos
tertius exurit lacrimosis casibus annus?’

²⁷ This is an example of Silius' technique of well-balanced, not episodic composition (*composizione compensativa*) in the *Punica*, in which the *popularis* Minucius becomes a source for the *popularis* Varro.

ite igitur, capite arma, uiri. mora sola triumpho
 paruum iter est. quae prima dies ostenderit hostem,
 et patrum regna et Poenorum bella resoluet.
 ite alacres, Latia deuinctum colla catena,
 Hannibalem Fabio ducam spectante per urbem.’ (Pun. 8.269–77)

“...Listen, worthy dictator, to the order issued by the people of Mars: this is their demand, that the Libyans be driven out and Rome relieved of her enemy. Are they impatient? No! They have endured countless woes, and a third year is now consuming them with its suffering and sorrow. Rise then and arm, citizens! A short march is all that divides you from victory. The first day that reveals the enemy to your view will end the tyranny of the senate and the war with Carthage. Go forward with good courage; I shall yet lead Hannibal through the city with Roman chains about his neck, and Fabius shall look on.”

In the passage above, the Drances component, which we saw previously in Silius’ characterization of Varro, returns; specifically, *bone dictator* (8.269) echoes Drances’ use of the vocative *bone rex* (Aen. 11.344) in his address to Turnus. Yet Varro’s emphasis lies on the *Martia plebes* and on their suffering during Fabius’ dictatorship as well as their consequent frustration, as the juxtaposition of *festinant* and *exurit* makes clear. Varro sounds very much like Hannibal, about whom Fabius warns Paulus on the eve of the battle of Cannae in Livy:

Idem enim tui quod hostium milites uolent; idem Varro consul Romanus quod Hannibal Poenus imperator cupiet. Duobus ducibus unus resistas oportet. (Liv. 22.39.18)

For your soldiers will desire the same thing as the soldiers of the enemy; Varro, the Roman consul, will long for the same thing as Hannibal, the Phoenician commander-in-chief. Single-handed you will have to thwart two generals.

In the last part of his speech Varro again disparages any idea of delaying battle. If in the beginning of the eighth book Fabius was for Hannibal a symbol of *cunctatio*, the only obstacle to the Romans passing under the Carthaginian yoke, here from Varro’s perspective, the interval of time that separates the Romans from celebrating a triumph is minimal, a victory that will take place, according to the delirious consul, right in front of Fabius’ eyes—Fabius would then be a spectator, just as we saw him portrayed earlier: *cassarum... irarum spectator* (7.123). The word *mora*, therefore, acquires a semantic register that encompasses the aspirations, intense passions, and idiosyncrasies not only of two opposing parties, as they act or prepare to act on the eve of the

battle (Fabius vs. Hannibal; Paulus vs. Varro), but also of pairs that are similar on ethical or strategic grounds (Fabius-Paulus, Varro-Hannibal). Hannibal makes this contrast clear, when he invites his soldiers to exploit Fabius' temporary absence from the theater of operations:

'dum dictator abest, rape, miles, tempora pugnae.
non sperata diu plano certamina campo
offert ecce deus...' (Pun. 7.531–33)

"Soldiers, seize the opportunity for battle, while Fabius is absent. See! Heaven offers us the chance so long denied of fighting on the open plain..."

Already in the battle of the Ticinus, Scipio, the father of Africanus, and Hannibal each urge their soldiers respectively with the exhortation *rapite arma, uiri*.²⁸ The result is *haud mora*:

'arma, uiri, rapite arma, uiri!' dux instat uterque.
ambobus uelox uirtus geminusque cupido
laudis et ad pugnas Martemque insania concors.
Haud mora... (Pun. 4.98–101)

"To arms, men, to arms with speed!" Each had the same restless valor and the same thirst for glory, and they were kindred spirits in their passion for war and battle. There was no delay.

4. *Telling similes*

To return to Varro, Silius ends his speech with a clear effect of ring composition and an interesting allusion:

Haec postquam increpuit, portis arma incitus effert
impellitque moras, ueluti cum carcere rupto
auriga indocilis totas effundit habenas
et praeceps trepida pendens in uerbera planta
impar fertur equis; fumat male concitus axis,
ac frena incerto fluitant discordia curru. (Pun. 8.278–83)

²⁸ See Burck (1984a) 10–12 and Ariemma (forthcoming). One of the more complex characters in the poem, Marcellus, exhibits demagogical behavior too. For instance, in the siege of Nola, the future conqueror of Syracuse displays a proclivity towards decisive and careless action ('...arma, cruentus/hostis adest, capite arma, uiri' clamatque capitque; "...seize the arms, to arms, the bloody enemy is near," he shouts and seizes them," Pun. 12.168–69). What distinguishes Marcellus from an irresponsible and dangerous demagogue is the experience of knowing how to discipline his instincts and rashness by means of good judgment. On Marcellus, see Fucecchi extensively in this volume (230–38).

After this invective he led the army in haste outside the gates and swept away all obstacles. So, when the starting-gate is broken down, the unskillful charioteer loses all control of the reins: bending forward with unsteady foothold to flog his team, he is borne on headlong at the mercy of the horses; the axles smoke with the excessive speed, and the tangled reins of the unsteady car swing from side to side.

In Livy the verb *increpo* closes out an important speech of Flaminius, *ne quieto quidem hoste ipse quieturus*. When beginning his harangue, Flaminius is indignant at those who would choose a more modest strategy: *immo Arreti ante moenia sedeamus*. Here Livy inserts an account of Flaminius' ominous fall from his horse:²⁹

Haec simul increpans cum ocus signa conuelli iuberet et ipse in equum insilisset, equus repente corruit consulemque lapsum super caput effudit. Territis omnibus qui circa erant uelut foedo omine incipiendae rei, insuper nuntiatur signum omni ui moliente signifero conuelli nequire. Conuersus ad nuntium 'Num litteras quoque' inquit 'ab senatu adfers quae me rem gerere uetant? Abi, nuntia, effodiant signum, si ad conuellendum manus prae metu obtorpuerit'. Incedere inde agmen coepit primoribus, superquam quod dissenserant ab consilio, territis etiam duplici prodigio, milite in uolgu laeto ferocia ducis, cum spem magis ipsam quam causam spei intueretur. (Liv. 22.3.11–14)

Uttering these scornful words he bade pluck up the standards quickly, and vaulted upon his horse, when suddenly the charger stumbled, and unseating the consul threw him over his head. The dismay which this occasioned in all who were present, as an evil omen for beginning the campaign, was intensified on its being reported that, although the standard-bearer was exerting all his might, the standard could not be pulled up. Rounding upon the messenger the consul cried: "Do you bring me a dispatch too from the senate, forbidding me to fight? Go tell them to dig the standard out, if their hands are too numb with fear to pull it up!" The column then began to advance, though the higher officers, besides disapproving of the consul's plan, were terrified by the double prodigy. The soldiers, most of them, rejoiced in the temerity of their commander: their hopes ran high, but the grounds for hoping they did not scrutinize.

Silius omits this episode in his treatment of the events at Trasimene in book 5 but evokes it in the simile of Varro and the *auriga* in the pre-battle phase of Cannae. This move on the Flavian poet's part confirms

²⁹ Cf. Cic. *Div.* 1.35.

the interdependence and overlap of the characters of Varro and Flaminius, as does the similarity of their behaviors (*haec postquam increpuit ~ haec simul increpans*).

Furthermore, we may compare a Virgilian passage:³⁰

saeuit toto Mars impius orbe
ut, cum carceribus sese effudere, quadrigae
addunt in spatia et frustra retinacula tendens
fertur equis auriga neque audit currus habenas (G. 1.511–14)

Wicked Mars rages all over the world, just as, when the chariots have poured out of their starting-posts, they rush on completing their laps, while the charioteer in vain tries to hold on to the reins but is carried by the horses: the chariot does not heed the reins.

Here the chaos of the civil war makes Rome ungovernable.³¹ Though postdating Virgil, Silius' material 'predates' the period of the civil wars and therefore anticipates through mirroring the events described by Virgil in the passage above, a connection further underlined by the phrase *saeuit toto Mars impius urbe*, which is echoed in Varro's *saeuit iam rostris*.

Moreover, Flaminius enters the epic stage of the *Punica* as a demagogue who ascends to power under unfavorable auspices:

Boiorum nuper populos turbauerat armis
Flaminius, facilisque uiro tum gloria belli,
corde leuem atque astus inopem contundere gentem.
sed labor haud idem Tyrio certasse tyranno.
hunc laeuis urbi genitum ad fatalia damna
ominibus parat imperio Saturnia fesso
ductorem dignumque uirum ueniente ruina. (Pun. 4.704–10)

The tribe of the Boii had formerly been attacked by an army under Flaminius; and then he had gained an easy triumph and crushed a fickle and guileless people; but to fight the Carthaginian general was a far different task. Flaminius was born in an evil hour to inflict fatal loss upon Rome; and Juno now chose him as ruler of an exhausted nation and a fit instrument of coming destruction.

Flaminius' *genitum ad fatalia damna* (4.708) will be echoed in Varro's *illum fastis labem suffragia caeca addiderant* (8.255). Juno will direct Hannibal's choices before Cannae and will present him with adversaries, who

³⁰ I follow here Danesi-Marioni (1986) *passim*.

³¹ Cf. *Aen.* 5.144–47.

foolishly disregard ill omens and are ready to wreak havoc on their own country (*dignum uirum ueniente ruina*, 4.710 ~ *quo conseruari Latium uictore puderet*, 8.252). In addition, the simile of Varro and the *auriga* calls to mind an analogous simile of Flaminius:

inde ubi prima dies iuris, clauumque regendae
 inuasit patriae, ac sub nutu castra fuere,
 ut pelagi rudis et pontum tractare per artem
 nescius, accepit miserae si iura carinae,
 uentorum tenet ipse uicem cunctisque procellis
 dat iactare ratem, fertur uaga gurgite puppis
 ipsius in scopulos dextra impellente magistri.
 ergo agitur raptis praeceps exercitus armis... (Pun. 4.711–18)

When his first day of office came, he seized the helm of the state and commanded the armies. So, if a mere landsman, with no skill to manage the sea, has got the command of a luckless vessel, he himself does the work of foul weather and exposes the ship to be tossed by every gale; she drifts at random over the sea, and the hand of her own captain drives her upon the rocks. So the army was equipped in haste and is led headlong...

The central idea here is incompetence: *rudis* and *nescius*, the climactic *homoiteleuton* of *tractare* and *iactare*, the *antithesis* of *per artem* and *procellis dat*. The result is a change in grammatical voice, from active to passive (*fertur*), as the boat becomes subject to the winds and the fury of nature. But at the end of the simile, the self-destructive impulse of the pilot is still in evidence, conveyed by the ablative absolute (*dextra impellente magistri*) and the forceful use of *impello*, next to which the noun *magister* sounds heavily ironic. This diptych of similes is put in still bolder relief by another simile, in which the foreseeing wisdom of Fabius,³² *cauta speculator mente futuri*, is compared to a cautious and expert helmsman:

ut saepe e celsa grandaeuus puppe magister,
 prospiciens signis uenturum in carbasa Corum,
 summo iam dudum substringit lintea malo. (Pun. 1.687–89)

As a veteran pilot often, when from his high ship he sees by tokens that the Corus will soon fall upon his canvas, reefs his sails in haste upon the top mast.

³² Cf. Dominik's (2003) 483 observations on the difference of Fabius' portrayal in Silius and Livy, but also Fucecchi in this volume (221–30).

The emphasis falls on the old age of the *magister*—and the detail of age here is not meant to be ironic—whose prudence is marked by his ability to foresee the coming wind (*prospiciens*) and, after careful scrutiny, to take appropriate action (*substringit lintea*).

Of great significance, however, is the intertextual connection between the Varro simile in *Punica* 8 and the conclusion of the exchange between Cicero and Pompey in Lucan. Unable to prevent the shedding of Roman blood, Pompey agrees to fight, though he knows that dishonor and infamy are equally in store for the victor and the defeated. Whereas Varro urges his men to arms (*ite igitur, capite arma, uiri*) and then leads the way (*portis arma incitus effert*), Pompey succumbs to Cicero's pressure and gives way, like a conquered helmsman, to the *furor* of warmongers (*arma/permittit*):

Sic fatur et arma
permittit populis frenosque furentibus ira
laxat et ut uictus uiolento nauita Coro
dat regimen uentis ignaumque arte relict
puppis onus trahitur. (Luc. 7.123–27)

So he speaks and grants the people warfare and, as they rage with anger, he lets go their reins; likewise the sailor, conquered by violent Corus, concedes control to the winds, and abandoning his skill, is swept along, a useless cargo on his ship.

5. *Enemy colleagues: Paulus and Varro*

In Fabius' *admonitio* to Paulus in book 8, the *Cunctator* uses a paradox to polarize, in moral terms, the opposition between the two consuls: for Varro it is *fas* to destroy his *patria*, while for Paulus it should not be *nefas* to save it, a distinction reinforced by the *anaphora* of *uni...uni* and the parallelism between *affligere fas...seruare nefas*:

cur, uni patriam si affligere fas est,
uni sit seruare nefas? (Pun. 8.317–18)

If a single man may destroy our country, why should not a single arm preserve it?

In his response to Fabius, Paulus exploits this ideological opposition³³ and sets himself apart from his colleague in the same rhetorical manner:

³³ Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2532.

consul datus alter, opinor,
 Ausoniae est, alter Poenis. trahit omnia secum
 et metuit demens, alio ne consule Roma
 concidat. e Tyrio consortem accite senatu,
 non tam saeua uolet. nullus, qui portet in hostem,
 sufficit insano sonipes. incedere noctis,
 quae tardent cursum, tenebras dolet, itque superbus
 tantum non strictis mucronibus, ulla retardet
 ne pugnās mora, dum uagina ducitur ensis. (Pun. 8.332–40)

Of the two consuls one, I believe, is their gift to Rome and the other their gift to Carthage. Varro drags all things in his train, and the madman fears that some other consul than himself may witness the fall of Rome. If a Carthaginian senator were summoned as my colleague, he would be less ruthless in his purpose. No war-horse is swift enough to carry that madman against the enemy; when the darkness of night comes on, he resents the hindrance to his activity; he marches proudly on, with swords that are all but drawn, that the drawing of the blade from the sheath may not delay the battle.

The parallelism of *Ausoniae*—*Poenis* emphasizes that the attack against Rome is on two fronts, one external, one internal. Fabius had similarly remarked on how the internal split would be dangerously destabilizing: *Ausoniae te proelia dira/teque hostis castris grauior manet* (“sore strife with the Romans lies ahead of you, and a more grievous foe in your own camp,” 8.300–1). Paulus also focuses on Varro’s intolerance of delay (*ulla retardet/ne pugnās mora*, 339–40), which is a Hannibalic trait. In fact, at the end of the disaster at Cannae, when Paulus addresses his colleague and then his *patria*, he equates Varro with Hannibal in such a way that it cannot be said who has harmed Rome more:

...haud umquam expedies tam dura sorte malorum,
 quem tibi non nasci fuerit per uota petendum,
 Varronem Hannibalemne, magis. (Pun. 9.637–39)

...Now that they are suffering such calamities, they will find no answer to this question: was Varro’s birth or Hannibal’s the worse calamity? And which should they have prayed heaven to avert?

Once again in book 9, as in the previous book, the narrator invites us to compare the two combatants, Hannibal and Varro, as the latter continues to blame Paulus for his tactics (*segnitiae increpitare*) and rages in battle no less than Hannibal does (*nec minor*):

...consul traducere noctem
 exsomis telumque manu uibrare per umbras
 ac modo segnitiae Paulum increpitare, modo acres

exercere tubas nocturnaue classica uelle.
nec minor in Poeno properi certaminis ardor. (*Pun.* 9.4–8)

The consul took no sleep that night but brandished his sword in the darkness, at one time blaming Paulus for inaction, at another seeking to sound by night the fierce war-note of his trumpets. Nor was Hannibal less eager for instant conflict.

Varro also remains obsessed with the idea of open battle (*turbidus ira/infensusque morae* (“fierce in anger and resenting the postponement of battle,” 9.23–24) and reaches a new level of delirium when he imagines a situation in which each soldier is his own master and commander. This marks a conspicuous rejection of the normal conventions and procedures of warfare:

‘...tradant immo hosti reuocatos ilicet enses,
tradant arma iube, aut pugnantum deripe dextris.
sed uos, quorum oculos atque ora umentia uidi,
uertere cum consul terga et remeare iuberet,
ne morem et pugnae signum expectate petendae.
dux sibi quisque uiam rapito, cum spargere primis
incipiet radiis Gargana cacumina Phoebus.
pandam egomet propere portas. ruite ocus atque hunc
ereptum reuocate diem.’ sic turbidus aegra
pestifero pugnae castra incendebat amore. (*Pun.* 9.28–37)

“...Better bid our men at once to surrender to the foe the swords and weapons which you called back from battle; or snatch them yourself from their grasp. But you, my men, whose faces I saw wet with tears when Paulus ordered you to turn your backs in retreat, break with custom and anticipate the word of command for battle: let each man be his own commander and rush to action as soon as the first rays of the sun are thrown on the summit of Mt. Garganus. I shall open the gates of the camp myself with no delay. Rush ahead and make up for the opportunity you were robbed of to-day.” Thus in his excitement he tried to animate the sick hearts of his men with a fatal desire for battle.

As in book 8, this speech reminds the reader of the exchange between Cicero and Pompey in Lucan. Varro is a worse version of Cicero³⁴ but also embodies at the same time some traits of Pompey’s character. In particular, Varro’s idea of a disorderly attack without the presence of a commander resonates with Cicero’s claim that a slow victory is impossible: the soldiers will eventually break ranks and attack, and

³⁴ Fucecchi (1999) 328–29. Cf. also *Pun.* 9.48–50 and *Luc.* 7.101–3.

Pompey will literally be forced to win. Cicero demands that Pompey hurry, or the signal may come too late (*signa...morantia*) and the troops will have entered the battlefield, leaving their general behind:

ipsae tua signa reuellent
 prosilientque acies: pudeat uicisse coactum.
 si duce te iusso, si nobis bella geruntur;
 sit iuris, quocumque uelint, concurrere campo.
 quid mundi gladios a sanguine Caesaris arces?
 uibrant tela manus, uix signa morantia quisquam
 expectat... (Luc. 7.77–83)

Of their own accord, the ranks will tear your standards up and spring forward: you should feel shame to have won under compulsion. If you are our bidden leader, if the war is waged for *us*, give the men the right to fight on whichever field they wish. Why do you keep from Caesar's blood the swords of all the world? Hands brandish weapons; hardly anyone can wait for the signal slow to sound...

At Cicero's behest, Pompey gives in, but he also highlights the difference between the neutrality of *pugnare* and the difficulty of *uincere*, since these are interrelated actions for anyone who is ready to confront danger. Pompey's point is that postponing battle may be a demonstration of power and courage:

fortissimus ille est
 qui, promptus metuenda pati, si comminus instent,
 et differre potest. placet haec tam prospera rerum
 tradere fortunae, gladio permittere mundi
 discrimen; pugnare ducem quam uincere malunt. (Luc. 7.105–9)

Bravest is that man who, quick to undergo ordeals if the loom close at hand, can also postpone them. They wish to hand to Fortune this our situation so successful, to surrender to the sword the crisis of the world they wish their leader to fight, rather than to win.

Silius appropriates the same verb *trado* from Pompey's speech and uses it in Varro's, as we saw above (9.28–29), when Varro charges that Paulus intends to surrender his arms to the enemy (*tradant...tradant*). As expected, the narrator has already pointed out the virtue of Paulus' thinking on the matter and his insistence on *mora*, at least for another day; it will be impossible to delay further since the power to decide will soon be in Varro's hands (*amenti uiro*):

nec pecudum fibras Varro et contraria Paulo
 auspica incusante deum compesceret arma,
 ni sors alterni iuris, quo castra reguntur,

arbitrium pugnae properanti in fata negasset.
 quae tamen haud ualuit perituris milibus una
 plus donasse die. rediere in castra, gemente
 haud dubie Paulo, qui crastina iura uideret
 amenti cessura uiro, frustraue suorum
 seruatas a caede animas. (Pun. 9.15–23)

Still though Paulus objected that the entrails of the victims were ominous of the gods' disfavor, Varro would not have checked the fighting, had not the rule of alternate command, over the army denied him the power of decision, as he rushed upon his fate. Yet this rule could give the doomed multitude a reprieve for one day only. Back they went to camp; and Paulus loudly lamented, because he saw that to-morrow the command would devolve on a madman, and that he had saved the lives of his men to no purpose.

Notable is the very Lucanian *iunctura* here, which marks Cornelia's, Pompey's wife's, request to leave her to the whims of fate. The wife's impatience has been transferred by Silius to the context of battle:

o saeui, properantem in fata tenetis? (Luc. 8.658)

O cruel men, do you restrain me racing towards me destiny?

Varro's behavior in the battle is focalized from the point of view of Hannibal. And it is interesting to note how the narrator's voice intrudes to remark proleptically on Varro's wish to have died, like Paulus, by Hannibal's hand on the battlefield:

heu miser! aequari potuisti funere Paulo,
 si tibi non ira superum tunc esset ademptum
 Hannibalis cecidisse manu. quam saepe querere,
 Varro, deis, quod Sidonium defugeris ensem! (Pun. 9.424–27)

Unhappy Varro! Death might have made him the equal of Paulus; but heaven's wrath would not suffer him to fall there by Hannibal's hand. How often was he to reproach the gods for saving him from the sword of the Carthaginian.

6. *An ignominious return: Varro as Pompey*

After his flight from the battlefield and the death of Paulus, the characterization of Varro seems to change to a certain extent and to come to full circle. Varro's return interrupts a speech of Fabius, which is rather agitated (*clamitat*) and unlike the usually calm, oratorical style of

the *Cunctator* in the *Punica*: he now appears to renounce the strategy of delaying and to privilege a rapid and furious defense of the walls:

celer omnia lustrans
clamitat attonitis Fabius: ‘non ulla relictā est,
credite, cunctandi ratio. appropere mus, ut hostis
nequiquam armatos ausit succedere muros.
dura inter pauidos alitur fortuna sedendo,
et gliscunt aduersa metu. ite ocius, arma
deripite, o pubes, templis. uos atria raptim
nudate et clipeos in bella refigite captos. (Pun. 10.593–600)

Fabius found speed and was everywhere, crying out to the panic-stricken people: “Believe me, there is no longer any reason for delay. Let us make haste to man the walls and baffle the enemy’s approach. Ill fortune is increased by the inaction of cowardice, and defeat is made worse by fear. Go quickly, you young men, and pull down the armor in the temples. Strip the walls of your houses with speed and take down for service the shields you took in fight.

The eccentricity of the Fabian strategy is underscored by his appeal to bystanders, who, it seems, are reluctant to believe him (*credite*), as he now rejects his former delaying tactics (*cunctandi ratio*), regarding them as impractical in light of recent events (*ulla relictā est*). An insane recourse to arms is put forward, as if Fabius now understands better Varro’s motives, whose *ite igitur, capite arma, uiri*, the *Cunctator* seems to repeat and replay: *ite ocius, arma deripite*, with *deripite* in the beginning of the hexameter forming a *figura etymologica* with the final *raptim*. Varro then shows up, as if he were ‘preceded’ by his own slogans, and causes silent commotion, which is explained by a simile of a helmsman after a shipwreck:

Dum Fabius lapsas acuit formidine mentes,
Varronem aduentare uagus per moenia rumor
spargit et occulto perfundit pectora motu:
haud secus ac, fractae rector si forte carinae
litoribus solus †uacuis† ex aequore sospes
adnatet, incerti trepidant, tendantne negentne
iactato dexteras, ipsamque odere salutem
unius amissa superantis puppe magistri. (Pun. 10.605–12)

While Fabius thus encouraged hearts that had failed for fear, a report that Varro was approaching spread up and down through the city and filled all hearts with secret uneasiness. So, when the captain of a wrecked ship is saved from the sea and swims ashore alone, men are at a loss and

uncertain whether to welcome the sea-tossed man or to disown him; they cannot bear that the captain only should be saved when his ship is lost.

Notable is the way in which the simile coheres with the broader context of which it is a part. Varro's appearance is almost cinematographically rendered: the shipwreck is described from the point of view of bystanders on the mainland, who are emotionally conflicted: should they help or ignore this man who destroyed them but is the only survivor? Their oscillating feelings are conveyed by the direction and flow of these verses: to *incerti trepidant* corresponds *tendantne negentne* (610), which shows *homoioteleuton* through the repetition of interrogative particles and a semantic antithesis; the oxymoron in *odere salutem* (611) is followed in 612 by a strong contrast between the solitude of the survivor and his lost ship (*unius amissa*). The consul appears as someone who has displayed insufficient competence in the service of a just cause, though he, unexpectedly, succeeds in recovering his moral dignity:³⁵

...sibi tristius illum
illuxisse diem, quo castris uiderit ire
Varronem, quam quo uideat remeare sine armis.
his dictis sedere minae et conuersa repente
pectora. nunc fati miseret, nunc gaudia Poeno
consulibus reputant caesis erepta duobus.
ergo omne effundit longo iam se agmine uulgus
gratantum, magnaue acutum se credere mente
testantur, quod fisus ausis sceptrisque superbis
Laomedontiadum non desperauerit urbi. (Pun. 10.620–29)

That day on which he saw Varro proceed to the camp was more painful to him than that on which he sees him return without an army. By his words their threats were silenced, and their feelings underwent a sudden change: now they pity Varro's misfortune or reflect that Hannibal has lost the satisfaction of slaying both the consuls. Therefore, all the populace poured forth in long procession to thank him; and they protested that he had acted nobly, when, relying on the ancient glory and power of his country, he refused to despair of the city inhabited by the sons of Laomedon.

The concern for the *sceptra superba* and, above all, the refusal to give up on Rome (appropriately identified by the name of a Trojan ancestor) goes back to a comment with which Livy closes his book on the

³⁵ Well put by Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2536.

battle of Cannae. There the statement that Varro would not have avoided punishment, if he had been Carthaginian (*qui si Carthaginien-sium ductor fuisset, nihil recusandum supplicii foret*, Liv. 22.61) picks up on something that Silius has amply developed elsewhere, namely, Varro's duality; this duality is, for example, evident when he shares character traits of the worst kind with Hannibal or when he exhibits, on several occasions, a double nature, being both a Roman and an internal enemy of Rome. Also significant is that Silius' Varro is fully aware of the moral debacle he is involved in: if the preceding similes centered on uncertain reactions to folly, now comes a powerful conclusion, in which Varro's *pudor* comes to the surface, a late recognition of the disaster he caused:

nec minus infelix culpa grandique pudore
turbatus consul titubantem ad moenia gressum
portabat lacrimans. deiectum attollere uultum
ac patriam aspicere et luctus reuocare pigebat.
quod uero reduci tum se populusque patresque
offerrent, non gratari, sed poscere natos
quisque suos fratresque simul miseraeque parentes
ire uidebantur laceranda ad consulis ora.
Sic igitur muto lictore inuectus in urbem
damnatum superis aspernabatur honorem. (*Pun.* 10.630–39)

None the less, sad at his failure and sore ashamed, Varro drew near the walls with faltering steps and weeping eyes; it was pain to him to raise his eyes from the ground and look upon his native city and recall their losses to the citizens. Though the senate and people came out then to meet him on his return, he felt that they were not there to thank him, but that each man was demanding a lost son or brother, and that unhappy mothers were ready to tear out the consul's eyes. Thus his lictors kept silence as he entered the city and he claimed no respect for the high office which the gods had condemned.

This is a game of impressions: there is no joy in sight for Varro, only the reality of people walking up to (against?) him, possibly in a hostile manner, as if to lynch him. Ashamed before the sanctity of the cortege of lictors, Varro refuses the honor (*aspernabatur honorem*). The condemnation of the gods (*damnatum superis*) elicits yet another connection between Varro and Lucan's Pompey:

ingemuit rector sensitque deorum
esse dolos et fata suae contraria menti... (*Luc.* 7.85–86)

The leader groaned and felt that this was trickery of the gods and that the Fates were hostile to his own intention...

The deceit of the gods,³⁶ who have chosen the *uictrix causa*, forces Pompey into flight, which occasions a curiously inverted form of *deuotio*: Pompey strives to save his men (the object of every *deuotio*) not by a heroic death (which is customary in a *deuotio*) but by fleeing. Pompey's actions may be compared to Varro's, to whom Hannibal had graciously conceded an escape:

'fuge, Varro,' inquit 'fuge, Varro, superstes,
dum iaceat Paulus. patribus Fabioque sedenti
et populo consul totas edissere Cannas.
concedam hanc iterum, si lucis tanta cupido est,
concedam tibi, Varro, fugam...' (Pun. 10.514–18)

He said: "Fly, Varro, fly and save your life, so long as Paulus lies dead! You are a consul: tell the whole story of Cannae to the senate and the people and to Fabius, the man of inaction. Once again, Varro, if you love life so much, I shall give you leave to fly..."

Hannibal's concession alludes to a moment in *Aeneid* 6, when Aeneas asks about the desire of souls to return to life:

quae lucis miseris tam dira cupido? (Aen. 6.721)

Why do the poor wretches have this terrible longing for light?

This allusion suggests that, as far as Hannibal is concerned, Varro is a dead-man-walking. The escape that Hannibal grants Varro (*fuge, Varro, ... fuge, Varro*) clearly resonates with the warning *fuge proelia Varro*, written in blood by the dying Solymus. At the same time, however, Hannibal's exhortation transforms Varro into a second Pompey, who is accompanied away from the battle by the narrating voice of the *De bello ciuili* with the phrase *fuge proelia dira* ("escape the hideous battle," Luc. 7.689); and yet this is a great occasion Varro will miss.³⁷

³⁶ Narducci (2002) 302.

³⁷ On the figure of Pompey in Silius, see Marpicati (1999). On *fugere proelia*, see Fucecchi (1999) 334–35 and Tipping (2004) 365–66.

b. *Ekphrasis and Imagery*

CHAPTER TWELVE

PICTURING THE FUTURE AGAIN: PROLEPTIC EKPHRASIS IN SILIUS' *PUNICA*

Stephen J. Harrison*

1. *Introduction*

In an article published in 2001 I discussed the phenomenon of proleptic ekphrasis, symbolic anticipation of a poem's plot in a formal description of an object, in Greek and Roman poetry from Homer to Virgil.¹ In the current piece, I would like to extend this method of analysis to the *Punica* of Silius, which here as elsewhere exploits techniques to be found in the *Aeneid*,² and to consider a number of its scenes of formal description from this perspective. I begin with a few methodological points and definitions.

In what follows, I will use the term *prolepsis* to refer to narrative anticipation. In the case of ekphrasis (formal description of objects), such *prolepsis* can be either literal (e.g., the description of the shield of Aeneas [*Aen.* 8.626–731] with its detailed and specific prophetic account of future Roman history) or symbolic (e.g., the description of the Danaid design on the sword-belt of Pallas [*Aen.* 10.497–500], which can be taken to represent indirectly by analogy the future death of Turnus).³ Again, *prolepsis* can be external or internal to the story-time of a literary narrative. Thus the shield of Aeneas narrates events which take place in Roman history after the poem, an external *prolepsis*, while the Danaid design, referring to events long before the poem's plot, uses them to anticipate analogous events in the poem, an internal *prolepsis*.

* I am most grateful to Antony Augoustakis for his editorial and bibliographical help.

¹ Harrison (2001).

² On Silius and Virgil, see e.g., the survey by von Albrecht (1964) 166–84. See also Ganiban (73–98) and Klaassen (99–126) in this volume for further bibliography. For the relationship between Virgil and other Flavian poets, such as Statius, see most recently Ganiban (2007).

³ Harrison (1998).

This proleptic function of ekphrasis raises the interesting question of whether such passages constitute a pause in the narrative of the poem: on the surface, the story stops and breaks for a description, but symbolically the description anticipates how the story will continue.⁴ Sometimes an ekphrasis can even be claimed to provide a miniaturized encapsulation of the whole plot of a narrative (*mise en abyme*).⁵ Finally, there is the issue of the perspective from which the ekphrasis is viewed: does the point of view of the character observing the object in the work's plot differ from that of the omniscient reader or narrator, and if so, does this introduce such features as dramatic irony, where the reader knows more than the character about the plot's coming development? Here we are dealing with questions of focalization: who sees the ekphrasis, who interprets it, and whether the two are identical or different.⁶

2. *Dido's temple*

In a key scene at the beginning of the poem, the young Hannibal is taken by his father Hamilcar to swear enmity to the Romans in the temple of Dido at Carthage,⁷ which receives a formal description:⁸

Vrbe fuit media sacrum genetricis Elissae
manibus et patria Tyriis formidine cultum,
quod taxi circum et piceae squalentibus umbris
abdiderant caelique arcebant lumine, templum.
hoc sese, ut perhibent, curis mortalibus olim
exuerat regina loco. stant marmore maesto
effigies, Belusque parens omnisque nepotum
a Belo series, stat gloria gentis Agenor
et qui longa dedit terris cognomina Phoenix.
ipsa sedet tandem aeternum coniuncta Sychaeo.

⁴ See Genette (1982) 127–44 and Fowler (2000) 64–85.

⁵ This has sometimes been claimed for the Theseus/Ariadne ekphrasis in Catullus 64. On *mise en abyme* in general, see Dällenbach (1989). On miniaturization in Flavian epic in particular, see Lovatt in this volume (155–76). In addition, in this volume Manolaraki discusses the function of waterscape ekphrasis as an encapsulation of the whole poem and as foreboding of Hannibal's future disasters (293–321).

⁶ Hence we can find “deviant” focalization, in which views seem to be attributed to a character, though they are more appropriate to the narrator or reader—on this and focalization in general, see helpfully Fowler (2000) 40–63.

⁷ On the oath scene, see Ganiban in this volume (74–83).

⁸ Translations are my own.

ante pedes ensis Phrygius iacet, ordine centum
stant arae caelique deis Ereboque potenti. (*Pun.* 1.81–92)

In the middle of the city stood a temple sacred to the spirit of its founding mother Dido, and honored by inherited awe amongst the Carthaginians, which yew-trees and pines had concealed all around with their untidy shade and kept from the light of heaven. In this place, so they say, the queen had long ago stripped herself of mortal cares. There stood statues in sad marble, father Belus and all the line of descendants from Belus, there stood Agenor, the glory of the race, and Phoenix, who gave a long-lasting name to the land. Dido herself was seated, joined for forever with Sychaeus; before her feet lay a Trojan sword, and a hundred altars stood in order for the gods of heaven and the ruler of Erebus.

This temple is surely a literary construct, not an attempt to imagine a real Carthaginian cult of Dido.⁹ As commentators have pointed out,¹⁰ it contains multiple references to the *Aeneid*, plainly recalling the temple of Juno (Tanit) surrounded by a grove in the middle of the city (*Aen.* 1.441),¹¹ in which Dido receives Aeneas at *Aeneid* 1.441–519, a temple with its own images there of the Trojan War; the *Punica*'s suggestion that this is the building in which Dido died is clearly inconsistent with the *Aeneid*, where her suicide takes place in her palace (4.494–97). The “Alexandrian footnote”,¹² *ut perhibent* (*Pun.* 1.85), may be an ironic gesture here, marking the alteration of Virgil's classic account, especially as Silius sticks to the Virgilian death-location in his retelling of the Dido story in 8.51 (*in penetralibus*). The series of ancestral statues, on the other hand, come from Latinus' temple/palace at *Aeneid* 7.170–91, while Dido's eternal pairing with Sychaeus naturally recalls their appearance in the underworld at *Aeneid* 6.472–74.

The significance of the description for its implied observer Hannibal is clearly a strong one. The Trojan sword lying before the seated Dido (*Pun.* 1.91) is “a reminder and a challenge”¹³ to Hannibal to take

⁹ See rightly Feeney (1982) *ad loc.*, arguing against the attempt by Picard (1974) to persuade that the temple is intended as a realistic reconstruction. Feeney rightly points out that there is no other evidence for Dido as a divinity receiving cult. Malamud (1989) 131–37 discusses the supernatural aspects of the scene.

¹⁰ Feeney (1982) *ad loc.* and Spaltenstein (1986) 16–17.

¹¹ On the associations of Juno and Tanit/Astarte in the poem, see Keith in this volume (359).

¹² For a helpful discussion of this idea, “the signalling of specific allusion by a poet through seemingly general appeals to tradition and report” (2), see Hinds (1998) 1–3. For *perhibent*, see Laudizi (1989) 103.

¹³ Feeney (1982) *ad loc.*

up the duty of vengeance against Rome laid upon him, not merely by his father in the current oath scene but also by the dying curse of Dido in the *Aeneid*, calling upon an *ultor* which was already identified with Hannibal in antiquity (*Aen.* 4.625).¹⁴ In this sense the *ensis Phrygius* indeed looks forward to the general *impius ensis* wielded by Carthage in the three Punic Wars according to Silius (1.10) and the particular *ensis* of Hannibal in the current poem (e.g., *Hannibal...passim furit et quatit ensem*, “Hannibal rages far and wide and brandishes his sword,” *Pun.* 1.429). This then is an internal symbolic prolepsis looking forward to Hannibal’s war against Rome. However, the reader also needs to recall how (outside the poem) Hannibal’s life will end like that of Dido, in suicide: he will eventually poison himself in 183 BC to prevent his handover to the Romans, an event already anticipated at *Punica* 2.705–7 and 13.890–93.¹⁵ Here, as often, in the poem there is some dramatic irony at Hannibal’s expense: he sees himself as the glorious avenger of Dido but in fact fails and ends up like her as a wretched suicide. The first ekphrasis of the poem already points to Hannibal’s disastrous end.

3. *Hannibal’s shield*

This passage is perhaps the most discussed of all the episodes in Silius’ poem. Scholars have repeatedly analyzed the scenes on the shield in *Punica* 2.406–52 and their reworking of the shield ekphraseis of Virgil (Aeneas), Homer (Achilles) and (ps.-) Hesiod (Hercules).¹⁶ None of these studies, however, has fully considered the aspect of symbolic prolepsis. A summary of the shield’s contents is helpful:

- 406–25: Close summary of the Dido story from *Aeneid* 1 and 4.¹⁷
- 426–31: Hannibal’s boyhood oath of vengeance and Hamilcar in aggressive pose.
- 432–36: Events from the First Punic War (Xanthippus defeats Regulus).
- 437–45: Punic pastoral activity.
- 446–52: Saguntum and the beginning of the Second Punic War.

¹⁴ Cf. Servius *ad loc.*: *ostendit Hannibalem* (“points to Hannibal”) and see Ganiban in this volume (85). On Hannibal’s devotion to his ancestors, see Bernstein (2008) 135–39.

¹⁵ Cf. Liv. 39.51.11–12.

¹⁶ See e.g., von Albrecht (1964) 173–77; Vessey (1975); Kißel (1979) 185–92; Laudizi (1989) 107–12; Küppers (1986) 154–64; Venini (1991); Devallet (1992); Campus (2003).

¹⁷ Cf. Ganiban’s analysis of the scene in this volume (84–91).

Hannibal is given the shield by supporters in Spain, evidently to bolster his war effort against Rome. The scenes should thus be designed to encourage him, but they can also be read as looking forward to his defeat, inevitable of course for the narrator and reader of the poem. Vessey has well noted in general terms: "Hannibal is now prepared to assume his fateful role in history. Upon the gilded surface of the shield is emblematically displayed a definition of that role, in terms of the past with which Hannibal is inextricably enmeshed, and by inference, of the future he cannot avoid."¹⁸

The images on the shield can in fact be interpreted very specifically as looking forward to Hannibal's downfall at the end of the poem. Once again (as in 1.81–92) the Dido story and her curse as the origin of the Punic Wars feature prominently (2.422–23); once more, this can be taken as predicting Hannibal's similar failure and suicide in the face of pre-ordained Roman victory, especially as Aeneas is depicted as sailing away *magnis...fatis* (2.425), "to his great destiny." Likewise the appearance of Hamilcar in aggressive mood matches and encourages the war effort of his son Hannibal, but again we need to recall Hamilcar's fundamentally unsuccessful career. Defeated in the First Punic War as his son was to be in the Second, he too suffers an undignified end, drowned while continuing to defy Rome in 229 BC.¹⁹ Hannibal's aggression in Spain, like his father's in Sicily, may have some successes but will ultimately be ineffective against the superior might of Rome and will form a prelude to a wretched death. The treacherous crossing of the Ebro (2.451) shows the villainy which will bring Hannibal down, just as the glorious suffering (*triste decus*) of Regulus' *fides* (2.435–36), seen by Hannibal and his supporters as a warning to Saguntum not to maintain its *fides* to Rome, in fact presents the virtue which will enable Rome to win through in the end.²⁰

One fascinating feature of the shield is its mixing of narrative time levels. As we have seen, Hannibal's boyhood oath (2.426–28) picks up a key scene in the opening book (internal flashback or analepsis), while the battle between Xanthippus and Regulus from the First Punic War (2.432–36) is recounted retrospectively in *Punica* 6 (299–551). Here we have an episode which is outside and anterior to the main story-time

¹⁸ Vessey (1975) 392.

¹⁹ Diod. Sic. 25.10.3–4.

²⁰ On Regulus' *fides*, see Augoustakis (2006).

of the poem (external analepsis) but which will be narrated by flashback at a later point in the poem (internal prolepsis). Equally interestingly, the final panel of the siege of Saguntum and the outbreak of the war (2.446–52) presents Hannibal not at a previous or subsequent point in the narrative but at the very moment of recounting in the plot: as in the unfolding storyline, Hannibal has broken the treaty (cf. *abrupto...foedere*, 1.296) and is currently engaged in the siege of Saguntum. This direct inscribing in ekphrastic terms of the current narrative moment, frozen in artifact form, is a move which goes beyond Virgilian technique.

Crucially, though, unlike Aeneas' prophetic shield, Hannibal's cannot take the narrative beyond the present. Hannibal himself interprets the shield overall as an omen of success to come:

tali sublimis dono noua tegmina latis
 aptat concutiens umeris celsusque profatur:
 'heu quantum Ausonio sudabitis, arma, cruore!
 quas, belli uindex, poenas mihi, Curia, pendes!' (Pun. 2.453–56)

Uplifted by such a gift, he shakes the new covering, fits it to his broad shoulders, and speaks with confidence: "Alas, how much you will run with Roman blood, my arms! What penalties you, Curia, arbiter of war, will pay to me!"

In recalling the famous words of Aeneas at *Aeneid* 8.538–40 (as commentators note),²¹ Hannibal displays a confidence which (unlike the Virgilian hero's) is wholly unjustified. Like the shields of the Seven against Thebes as presented by Aeschylus, intended to proclaim their forthcoming victory but in fact anticipating their deaths (*Th.* 369–652),²² Hannibal's shield presents devices which are deeply ambiguous and can be interpreted by the knowing reader as portending his downfall. As Ganiban correctly identifies in this volume, "the shield offers a revealing, mortal perspective on Hannibal's world, one that is rooted in the experiences of Dido. The shield may be presented to Hannibal as an emblem of his heroic greatness and his role in Carthaginian history; however it ultimately points to the problematic nature of his aspirations of defeating Rome" (84). Once again the ekphrasis implies doom for Hannibal if read in a particular way, and there is strong

²¹ E.g., Spaltenstein (1986) 150. See also Ganiban's discussion of the passage in this volume (90–91).

²² See conveniently Harrison (2001) 77–8 (with references).

dramatic irony: Hannibal thinks he will overcome Rome, but the reader knows better.

4. *Hercules' temple at Gades*

In *Punica* 3 Hannibal visits the temple of Hercules at Gades (Cadiz):²³

In foribus labor Alcidae: Lernaea recisis
 anguibus hydra iacet, nexuque elisa leonis
 ora Cleonaei patulo caelantur hiatu.
 at Stygius saevis terrens latratibus umbras
 ianitor, aeterno tum primum tractus ab antro,
 uincla indignatur, metuitque Megaera catenas.
 iuxta Thraces equi pestisque Erymanthia et altos
 acripedis ramos superantia cornua cerui.
 nec leuior uinci Libycae telluris alumnus
 matre super stratique, genus deformis, bimembres
 Centauri frontemque minor nunc amnis Acarnan.
 inter quae fulget sacratis ignibus Oete,
 ingentemque animam rapiunt ad sidera flammae. (*Pun.* 3.32–44)

On the doors was the laboring of Hercules: the Lernean Hydra lay with its snakes cut back, and the strangled head of the Nemean lion was engraved with its wide gape. And the gatekeeper of Hell, terrifying the shades with his savage barking, was dragged then for the first time from his everlasting cave and complained at his bonds, and Megaera herself feared chains. Next were the Thracian horses and the curse of Erymanthus and the horns of the bronze-footed stag which were taller than lofty branches. There too was the nursling of Libya's earth, no easier to overcome when set on his mother, and the hybrid Centaurs (an ugly race) all laid low, and the Acarnanian river with his forehead reduced. Amongst all these Oeta shone out with its hallowed fires, and flames carried the mighty soul to the stars.

As with the temple of Dido in book 1, scholars have tried to use these images to reconstruct a realistic temple,²⁴ but once again we are surely dealing with a construct which is primarily literary.²⁵ As has been well noted, these decorated temple doors in an extreme western city recall the similar doors of Apollo's temple at Cumae as described at *Aeneid* 6.20–33. Silius' images are more positive than Virgil's themes,²⁶ which

²³ On Hannibal's visits to temples, see Ariemma (2007).

²⁴ Cf. Tsirkin (1981).

²⁵ So rightly Spaltenstein (1986) 181 and Gibson (2005) 182–84.

²⁶ Well noted by Gibson (2005) 183.

cover the darker sides of the Cretan monarchy from the disaffected perspective of the exile Daedalus; this is natural in an encomiastic set of reliefs in a god's own temple. In Silius the reader sees through the focalization of the character Hannibal, who in the *Punica* is repeatedly compared by himself and others to Hercules (1.509–14, 2.356–57, 4.4, 11.136, 15.505–6) and is surely interested in the analogy again here,²⁷ though his instant distraction (*mira dehinc cernit*, 3.46) by the marvelous tides of the Atlantic prevents us from hearing his explicit reaction.²⁸

The depiction of the Herculean labors here has been seen as a purely traditional move,²⁹ but it can be read as engaging in some detail with key themes of the poem. Once again, the description of Hercules can be read in a manner which stresses Hannibal's doom rather than a self-glorifying identity with the god. For, as has long been noted, the successful Hercules figure of the *Punica* is not Hannibal but Scipio, his eventual conqueror.³⁰ It is Scipio who like Hercules accomplishes a successful *katabasis* (13.395–895), makes the choice between Virtue and Pleasure following the Prodician Hercules of Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (15.18–128), and ultimately achieves glory and quasi-apotheosis explicitly compared to those of Hercules at the end of the poem (17.649–50, 653–54).³¹ Hannibal's ultimate fate of defeat and death is foreshadowed rather in the monsters slain in Hercules' labors: the lion of Nemea is perhaps picked up in Fabius Cunctator's description of Hannibal as *Libycum...leonem* (7.401), while Antaeus, "the nursling of Libya's earth," can be made to parallel Hannibal, commonly associated with Libya (Africa) in the *Punica* (*rector Libyae*, 3.173; *Libyae ductor*, 4.39). Hannibal's vast ambition to emulate the rise of Hercules to divinity will be cut short in the *Punica*.³²

²⁷ Cf. Augoustakis (2003a) 235 n. 2 for further references and bibliography. See also Asso (179–92) and Tipping (193–218) in this volume.

²⁸ See Manolaraki's analysis of the tides in this volume (295–306).

²⁹ E.g., Spaltenstein (1986) 181.

³⁰ Bassett (1966). Hannibal's imitation of the negative sides of Hercules' exploits is treated by Augoustakis (2003a).

³¹ On Scipio's heroism in the poem, see Marks (2005a) *passim*; Tipping in this volume points to the negative elements in Scipio's character that Silius exploits to turn him into the exemplar of subsequent Roman autocracy (193–218).

³² On Hannibal's impious ambition in the *Punica*, see Fuccechi (1990a).

5. *The temple at Liternum*

At the end of *Punica* 6 Hannibal, victorious in Italy after Trasimene, finds himself at Liternum in Campania and in another temple; the deity to whom the temple is dedicated is never revealed, and although there is a temple at Liternum,³³ here again we are likely to be dealing with a literary fiction rather than an element of archaeological record.³⁴ The main feature of the temple is a series of wall-paintings depicting characters and events from the First Punic War (6.658–97).³⁵ Regulus and Xanthippus (again),³⁶ Appius Claudius, C. Duilius, L. Cornelius Scipio (grandfather of the *Punica*'s own Scipio), Lutatius, Hamilcar and the concluding peace agreement between Rome and the defeated, humbled Carthaginians.

Hannibal's reaction to this display of past Roman victories and the humiliation of his people is understandably hostile, and in the concluding words of the book he hopes for an answering set of paintings in Carthage to celebrate his own victories past and future:

non leuiores dabis nostris inscribere tectis
 acta meae dextrae: captam, Carthago, Saguntum
 da spectare, simul flamma ferroque ruentem;
 perfodiant patres natorum membra. nec Alpes
 exiguus domitas capiet locus; ardua celsis
 persultet iuga uictor equis Garamasque Nomasque.
 addes Ticini spumantis sanguine ripas
 et nostrum Trebiam et Thrasymenni litora Tusci
 clausa cadaueribus. ruat ingens corpore et armis
 Flaminius, fugiat consul manante cruore.
 Scipio et ad socios nati ceruice uehatur.
 haec mitte in populos, et adhuc maiora dabuntur.
 flagrantem effinges facibus, Carthago, Libyssis
 Romam et deiectum Tarpeia rupe Tonantem.
 interea uos, ut dignum est, ista, ocius ite,

³³ See <http://www.hunterian.gla.ac.uk/contact/staff/jdevine/Liternum/Liternum.shtml> (accessed 21.12.2008).

³⁴ For the most extensive modern analyses, see Fowler (2000) 86–107 and Marks (2003).

³⁵ This is likely to be a homage to Naevius' *Bellum Punicum* (fr.4 Strzelecki), the great epic of the First Punic War, though the exiguous remains of the latter allow little certainty; cf. Fowler (2000) 96–97.

³⁶ Note that this time the story appears by both internal and external analepsis (it is anterior to the main plot-line but has been narrated by Marus earlier in the same book, in 6.101–551).

o iuuenes, quorum dextris mihi tanta geruntur,
in cineres monumenta date atque inuoluite flammis. (*Pun.* 6.700–16)

You will grant, Carthage, that the deeds of my right hand, no less impressive than these, should be inscribed on our buildings: grant us the sight of a captured Saguntum, collapsing with both fire and sword: let fathers be shown piercing their children's limbs, and no small space will contain the conquest of the Alps. Let Garamantes and Nomades dance over the mountains victorious on horseback; add in the banks of the Ticinus, foaming with blood, and Trebia in our hands, and the shores of Etruscan Trasimene blocked off with bodies; let Flaminius, mighty in body and arms, collapse, let the consul Scipio flee dripping blood and be carried on his son's neck to his allies. Broadcast these to the people, and still greater achievements will be granted. You, Carthage, will depict Rome flaming with African torches and Jupiter cast down from the Tarpeian rock. Meanwhile you, my men, as is only just, by whose hands such great deeds are being done for me, go to it quickly, and turn these commemorations into ashes and envelop them in flames.

Here Hannibal imagines depictions that combine his victories which the poem has narrated so far with a future triumph yet to be accomplished, the sack of Rome. The catalogue of Hannibal's past achievements in Spain and Italy (6.701–10) in effect constitutes a partial and selective *mise en abyme* of the poem by mentioning all the military high points in the *Punica* so far: the capture of Saguntum (*Pun.* 1–2), the passage of the Alps (*Pun.* 3), the battles of the Ticinus and the Trebia (*Pun.* 4) and Lake Trasimene (*Pun.* 5). The new Carthaginian victories of the Second Punic War are to blot out the defeats and humiliations of the First.

This scenario of revenge is of course only Hannibal's fantasy: Rome will eventually triumph again, and the prophetic prolepsis of final Carthaginian victory (6.712–13) is pure wishful thinking, with heavy dramatic irony to be felt by the reader. Perhaps Hannibal is imagined as ordering the destruction of the temple pictures because in fact they tell the unacceptable truth about the future which is his greatest fear: (repeated) Roman victory. The poem will indeed end in Rome, but with Scipio's triumph there, not with Hannibal's destruction of the city. The last line of the *Punica* sees Jupiter not cast down from the Capitol but in proud possession of Rome's most sacred Hill: the phrase *Tarpei... Tonantis* (17.654), in the last line, clearly inverts *deiectum Tarpeia rupe Tonantem* in 6.713.

One appealing issue is why this passage occurs at this point in the poem, and in this particular geographical location at Litternum.³⁷

³⁷ Both issues are raised by Spaltenstein (1986) 437, but without providing answers.

Structurally, one could argue that this is a high point of success for Hannibal in the *Punica*, moving freely about Italy in the aftermath of the victory of Trasimene, with the Romans in disarray before the pivotal appointment of Fabius Cunctator as dictator at the beginning of the following book (*Pun.* 7), and that originally this finale of the sixth book forms the climax to the first hexad of a poem originally planned in eighteen books;³⁸ the temple-ekphrasis' stress on Hannibal's high ambition, and its evident lack of ultimate fulfillment, would be highly appropriate here. Topographically, as several scholars have noted,³⁹ the town of Liternum for a Roman reader must have evoked the future life of the poem's hero Scipio, for it was there that he died in 183 BC after withdrawing controversially from public life (*Liv.* 38.52.1), and his villa of retirement was later used by Seneca for a brief stay (*Ep.* 86). The Scipiones are suitably prominent in this Silian episode set at a place where they had an estate: the temple pictures refer to Scipio's grandfather (6.671), while Hannibal alludes to Scipio's famous rescue of his father at the Trebia (6.710). Hannibal may give orders to destroy the temple decorations at Liternum, but the place itself is indelibly associated with his conqueror Scipio, who will ensure that Hannibal's ambitions to destroy Rome remain unfulfilled.

This link may provide some explanation for the otherwise mysterious anonymous temple. For Seneca, and no doubt for other followers of the "Scipionic legend" of the hero's divine connections,⁴⁰ Scipio's villa at Liternum becomes a quasi-shrine to the great man and has some religious associations: Seneca describes himself as praying to Scipio's spirit and honoring an altar which he thinks may be his actual place of burial (*Ep.* 86.1). The anonymous temple in the *Punica* with its decorations which honor the Scipiones may not only point to their local status at the time but may also constitute a subtle allusion to Seneca's later religious veneration at Liternum, given that Silius seems to have known at least some of Seneca's literary output.⁴¹ Perhaps the Scipio of the future is in some sense the missing cult-deity here.

³⁸ For a discussion of the poem's possible structure, see Augoustakis' introduction in this volume.

³⁹ Duff (1934) 328–29, Fowler (2000) 98, Marks (2003) 144.

⁴⁰ For the "Scipionic legend," see Walbank (1967) and Scullard (1970) 18–23.

⁴¹ See Klotz (1927) 84.22 and Fucecchi (1993) 32–36.

6. *Hasdrubal's cloak*

In *Punica* 15 Hannibal's brother Hasdrubal faces battle with Scipio in Spain, and there is a description of his cloak as he prays to the gods:

fraternum laena nitebat
 demissa ex umeris donum, quam foederis arti
 Trinacrius Libyco rex inter munera pignus
 miserat, Aeolis gestatum insigne tyrannis.
 aurata puerum rapiebat ad aethera penna
 per nubes aquila intexto librata uolatu.
 antrum ingens iuxta, quod acus simulauit in ostro,
 Cyclopus domus. hic recubans manantia tabo
 corpora letifero sorbet Polyphemus hiatu.
 circa fracta iacent excussaue morsibus ossa.
 ipse manu extenta Laertia pocula poscit
 permiscetque mero ructatos ore cruores. (*Pun.* 15.421–32)

A woolen cloak falling from his shoulders shone out, a gift from his brother, which the Sicilian king had sent amongst other gifts to the African as a pledge of their close alliance, an emblem worn by Aeolian tyrants. An eagle poised in woven flight was carrying a boy through the clouds to heaven on gilded wing. Next was a vast cave, which needlework had imitated on the purple, the home of the Cyclopes. Here, reclining, Polyphemus swallowed bodies dripping with gore with his deadly jaws, while all around lay broken bones tossed out from his chewing. He himself with outstretched hand demands the cup of Odysseus and mixes with wine the blood he belches out from his mouth.

Apollonius' *Argonautica* presents a famous example of a cloak-description which characterizes its wearer Jason and looks forward to his future actions, stressing that he is a warrior of the bedroom rather than of the battlefield.⁴² We might therefore expect this cloak-description to characterize Hasdrubal here and anticipate his future. The two motifs are mythological, the kidnap of Ganymede and the Odyssean Cyclops, and the cloak clearly draws on the cloak presented to Cloanthus by Aeneas at *Aeneid* 5.250–57, which has the same Ganymede design,⁴³ as well as on the description of Polyphemus at *Aeneid* 3.618–38.

How could these two images characterize Hasdrubal? Ripoll has argued that the picture of Ganymede, the boy snatched up to heaven,

⁴² See Harrison (2001) 81–84 (with bibliography).

⁴³ For a full treatment of the Virgilian passage, see Hardie (2002).

here as elsewhere in Latin epic represents the apotheosis of the hero.⁴⁴ This would presumably be a potential compliment to the intended wearer by the cloak's maker or giver; here this would also constitute a nicely ironic prolepsis for Hasdrubal, who will be defeated and dead by the end of this same book of the *Punica* (15.805–7): any high hopes of his reaching heaven will soon be dashed. This would fit Hasdrubal's far from complimentary characterization in the very next episode, where he flees over the Alps to Gaul in disguise (15.471–92) rather than facing up to Scipio: in the *Punica* he is not suitable material for apotheosis.⁴⁵ If there is an apotheosis indicated here, it is ironically the potential heroic career of Hasdrubal's current foe Scipio, suggested by the Trojan Ganymede's identity as Aeneas' relative and part of Rome's ancestry.⁴⁶

The picture of Polyphemus could also be a similar potential compliment to the wearer, this time characterizing him as a fearsome opponent who will make mincemeat of his enemies; but once again, an ironic proleptic interpretation is available. As we have just seen, Hasdrubal will shortly feel rather than inspire fear; as in the intimidating shield-devices of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, the picture boasts more than the wearer can deliver.⁴⁷ The choice of Polyphemus presumably also owes something to the Sicilian antecedents of the cloak: Virgil and Ovid, following Theocritus, had located the Cyclops in Sicily, and the garment therefore bears an emblem of its place of origin. Most importantly, the image primarily recalls the story of Polyphemus in the *Odyssey*, one of ultimate defeats for the monster. Silius' image leaves the Cyclops as he is about to get drunk through the wiles of Odysseus, a key stage in his downfall,⁴⁸ and here we surely have a prolepsis of Hasdrubal's impending disaster.⁴⁹ Just as the reader can supply the (here unnarrated but impending) end of the story of Polyphemus, outwitted and blinded by Odysseus, so the reader can supply the (soon-to-be narrated) end of the story of Hasdrubal, outwitted

⁴⁴ Ripoll (2000c).

⁴⁵ I remain to be convinced of a possible allusion here to Jupiter's care for the Romans, whom he has "taken under his wing," as he did Ganymede (Frank [1974] 843).

⁴⁶ So Ripoll (2000c) 497–99.

⁴⁷ See Harrison (2001) 77–78.

⁴⁸ As noted by Ripoll (2000c) 498.

⁴⁹ For this point (and several other good points on the cloak-ekphrasis), see Augoustakis (2003b).

and decapitated by C. Claudius Nero at the battle of Metaurus. At the end of this book, Hasdrubal himself will, like Polyphemus, suffer disastrously in the end the just revenge of a superior enemy.⁵⁰

Both images could have relevance to Hannibal, the immediate giver of the cloak to his brother, as well as to the cloak's ultimate origins in Sicily. The transit of Ganymede to heaven matches Hannibal's hopes for Herculean-style glory and apotheosis which we have already seen as a repeated theme in the *Punica*; again, as for Hasdrubal and as we have seen repeatedly stressed already, such high ambition is ironically overweening and ultimately thwarted. Polyphemus, on the other hand, the one-eyed monster, would be an appropriately ironic characterization of Hannibal.⁵¹ Like Polyphemus, Hannibal, the tragic hero of the *Punica* as Ganiban maintains in this volume (96–98), is one-eyed (cf. 4.751–62), literally thirsting for human blood (1.59–60) and a scorner of the gods (1.58), and like Polyphemus, he will end up defeated and humiliated by the poem's hero.

7. Conclusion

The scenes of formal artifact description discussed here show that Silius' *Punica* can wield with some skill a key narratological tool from the *Aeneid* and the epic tradition in general, the ekphrasis which symbolically anticipates the future, whether within the plot of the poem or outside it. These proleptic ekphraseis have been shown to be subtle and complex in their technique rather than tired repetitions of earlier material, and suggest that some previous negative judgments on Silius may have underestimated his literary skill through insufficiently probing analysis.

⁵⁰ It has also been argued (Campus [2003] 36–37) that the combination of the boy Ganymede and the cannibal Polyphemus reflects Roman propaganda about Carthaginian child-sacrifice (*molk*), but this is perhaps too tenuous.

⁵¹ I here summarize the good arguments of Frank (1974) 843–44.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SILIUS' NATURAL HISTORY: TIDES IN THE *PUNICA*

Eleni Manolaraki*

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* 4.3.217–20

1. *Introduction*

The importance of waterscapes in the *Punica* has been increasingly recognized by critics. Santini discusses extensively the motif of animated rivers as mirroring the ecological concerns of the first century AD.¹ Bona catalogues rivers and lakes in the geographical panoramas that foreshadow Hannibal's doom throughout the epic.² Schrijvers, who explores how Silius lends sublimity to the *Punica* by connecting the historical events with natural phenomena, includes waterscapes among the examples of this blended treatment.³ These discussions, however, do not focus on the characters' visual interaction with the waterscape, an interpretative trope employed in traditional, artistic ekphrasis in the *Punica*. Discussing Hannibal's tour of the Phlegraean fields (12.113–57), Muecke rightly observes that “geographical ecphrases [*sic*] have attracted much less attention than other, more obviously symbolically resonant descriptions of place in Roman poetry.”⁴ Following Muecke, my discussion goes some way in remedying this imbalance by focusing

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¹ Santini (1991) 63–113.

² Bona (1998) 95–134.

³ Schrijvers (2006) 102.

⁴ Muecke (2007) 75.

on the ekphraseis of tides in the *Punica*. These waterscapes are anchored in the narrative primarily through the gaze of Hannibal, who is the viewer of the major monumental and geographical ekphraseis of the poem.⁵ By applying the interpretative tools of artistic ekphrasis to the natural ekphraseis of tides, I integrate these scenes to the larger architecture of the *Punica* and to the literary, scientific, and historical traditions on tides which inform Silius' epic. I propose that through a complex intratextual and intertextual network, Silius establishes his own authorial persona within the text and illuminates Hannibal's failure in terms of personal responsibility, divine necessity, and historical determinism. The disparity between Silius' external, authorial vision of tides and Hannibal's internal one generates a textured understanding of the main character of the *Punica* and, by implication, of the epic itself.⁶

To begin with, I examine the archetypal description of tides in the *Punica*, the Atlantic tides at Gades (3.45–61), an episode which follows immediately Hannibal's viewing of the Herakleion doors (3.32–44).⁷ Then I discuss the larger significance of this passage in the epic, moving in a twofold direction: a) Silius contrasts Hannibal's limited visual and cognitive experience of the tides with his own authoritative exegesis, which results from a deeper understanding of the *cosmos*.⁸ Silius reinforces his poetic authority through specific intratextual and intertextual echoes of tidal descriptions spanning different authors and genres.⁹ b) Silius' description of the Atlantic tides shifts throughout the poem, linking thematically episodes that appear connected only linearly: Hanno's warning against the war in the Punic senate

⁵ For a summary of the other ekphrastic episodes in the *Punica* as filtered through Hannibal's gaze, see Vessey (1975) on Hannibal's shield; Augoustakis (2003a) 253, Wilson (2004) 228, Gibson (2005), and Ariemma (2007) on the Herakleion; Fowler (1996) 64–74 and Marks (2003) on the Litternum frescoes; and Harrison on ekphrasis in this volume (279–92).

⁶ For the disparity between the vision of ekphrasis by an internal character and by the author (and his audience), see Elsner (2004) 157–85. On recent trends on the ekphrastic project, see Bartsch and Elsner (2007) i–vi.

⁷ For the historical aspects of the Herakleion and a comparison with Silius' ekphrasis, see Tsirkin (1981).

⁸ I use the name of Silius as shorthand for the narrative voice of the text. My approach is informed rather than influenced by reader-response theory and gaze theory, as discussed by Salzman-Mitchell (2005) 1–21 (especially 18).

⁹ For a detailed overview of Greco-Roman literature on tides, beginning with Herodotus, see Eckenrode (1975).

(2.276–326), a particular fresco at Liternum (6.684–91), Hannibal's winter quartering in Capua (11.259–482), his visit to the Phlegraean fields, his failed attempts to recapture Campanian cities, Marcellus' defense of Nola (12.1–294), the siege of Syracuse (book 14), and Hannibal's recall from Italy (17.158–291). Through the multifaceted symbolism of the Atlantic tides, Silius programmatically casts himself as a reliable interpreter of Hannibal's fate, which is borne through by subsequent tidal episodes. Silius suggests that Hannibal's tragically heroic fate, discussed further by Ganiban in this volume (73–98), is ruled by both personal responsibility and cosmic necessity and is tied inexorably to the grand historical narrative of Roman destiny.

2. *Looking and seeing the Atlantic tides*

The programmatic importance of book 3 for Hannibal's characterization, and for the *Punica* itself, has not escaped critical attention. Here Silius begins to delineate the relationship of Hannibal to "destiny and the unalterable course of history."¹⁰ In this context, Hannibal's misreading of Hercules' labors depicted on the doors of the demigod's temple (*in foribus labor Alcidae*, 3.32) prefigures his ephemeral success. Gibson connects Hannibal's experience at the Herakleion to the epic *topos* of heroic pilgrimage and compares it to historical traditions of similar pilgrimages by Caesar and Alexander.¹¹

It is therefore surprising that the ekphrasis of the Atlantic tides (3.45–61), which follows immediately after the much discussed Herakleion doors, has been considered little more than a digression.¹² Silius defines the tides as *pelagi labores* ("toils of the sea," 3.58), explicitly echoing Hannibal's previous viewing of Hercules' *labores* on the temple doors. The repetition of the keyword *labor* in such close narrative proximity reinforces the connection between the two vistas, which are also linked through their temporal sequence (*postquam... dehinc*,

¹⁰ Vessey (1982a) 320.

¹¹ Gibson (2005). See also in this volume Harrison's analysis of the Herakleion ekphrasis (285–86) and Asso's views on the role of Hercules (179–92).

¹² Gibson (2005) 184 considers the tidal description an example of poetic delay (*mora*). Spaltenstein (1986) 183 dismisses the tides as "un thème presque obligé." See *contra* Schrijvers (2006) 106–9, who expands on the symbolical significance of this episode, but without reference to vision or ekphrasis.

3.45–46).¹³ Clearly, the artistic and natural ekphraseis are meant to be ‘seen’ together as complementary. But unlike Hannibal’s viewing of the Herakleion doors, an elaboration of a brief reference in Livy, his gaze of Atlantic tides is wholly Silius’ creation.¹⁴ His insertion of this second ekphrasis invites the question of the significance of Hannibal’s tidal experience in the larger agenda of the epic. In order to establish this significance, we need to look more closely at what Hannibal sees:

Postquam oculos uaria impleuit uirtutis imago,
mira dehinc cernit: surgentis mole profundi
inuctum terris subitum mare nullaue circa
litora et infuso stagnantes aequore campos.
nam qua caeruleis Nereus euoluitur antris
atque imo freta contorquet Neptunia fundo,
proruptum exundat pelagus, caecosque relaxans
Oceanus fontes torrentibus ingruit undis.
tum uada, ceu saeuo penitus permota tridenti,
luctantur terris tumefactum imponere pontum.
mox remeat gurges tractoque relabitur aestu;
at ratis erepto campis deserta profundo
et fusi transtris expectant aequora nautae.
Cymothoes ea regna uagae pelagique labores
Luna mouet, Luna immissis per caerula bigis,
fertque refertque fretum, sequiturque reciproca Tethys.

Haec propere spectata duci; nam multa fatigant. (*Pun.* 3.45–61)

After a varied imagery of virtue sated his eyes, he sees next a marvelous sight: the sea rushing suddenly on the lands with the mass of the rising deep, and the fields dripping with the invading sea, and no encircling shores, and the fields inundated by the invading water. For, where Nereus rolls forth from his blue caverns and churns up the waters of Neptune from the bottom, the sea rushes forward in flood, and Ocean, loosening its hidden springs, attacks with furious waves. Then the shallows, as if moved to the depths by the fierce trident, wrestle to impose on the lands the swollen sea. But soon the water turns and glides back with ebbing tide; and then ships, robbed of the sea, are stranded on the ground, and the sailors, pouring over their benches, wait for the sea. It is the moon, the moon that moves this realm of wandering Cymothoe and the struggles of the deep; driving her chariot through the sky, the moon draws

¹³ On the significance of *labor* in *Punica* 3 and generally for Hannibal’s characterization, see below n. 50. On the actual distance between the temple of Heracles and Gades, see Str. 3.5.3.

¹⁴ Cf. Liv. 21.21.9. On the influence of Livy’s third decade on the *Punica*, see Taisne (1994).

the sea back and forth, and Tethys follows in unison. These things were viewed in haste by the general; because many things trouble him.¹⁵

The tidal ekphrasis is solidly anchored in the narrative through Hannibal's enthralled viewing (*mira...cernit*, 3.46) which turns seamlessly from the temple doors (3.32–44) to the tides.¹⁶ Similarly, Silius signals the end of his description by reminding his audience that this seascape is focalized through Hannibal's gaze (*haec propere spectata duci*, 3.61). Yet a closer look reveals that a great part of the tidal vista is not visible to Hannibal but only to Silius' audience. Hannibal certainly perceives the seething Atlantic thrown violently on the shoreline (*surgentis...campos*, 3.46–48) that is the initial part of Silius' ekphrasis. Here, however, the narrative breaks from Hannibal's vision and turns into a complex aetiology of this phenomenon introduced with *nam* (3.49) and concluding with *Tethys* (3.60). In other words, Silius abandons Hannibal's limited gaze which moves solely on the surface of the rising tide and shares with his audience his own privileged vision.

Silius' perception of the tides surpasses Hannibal's empirical viewpoint in spatial, temporal, and epistemic terms. In spatial terms, Silius directs his audience both below and above the surface of the ocean, to explain rather than merely describe what Hannibal sees: the incoming current is presented as the result of cosmic forces at work, which take place both in the deep and in the sky. Silius' expanded spatial vision is underlined by his use of the adjective *caerulus* to describe both domains (*caeruleis...antris*, 3.49 ~ *caerulea*, 3.59). In temporal terms, Silius extends the linear time occupied by Hannibal's hasty viewing (*haec propere spectata*, 3.61) of the first half of the tidal cycle, the flow. The poet's own description includes the complementary phase, the ebb (*mox remeat...nautae*, 3.55), which is clearly not noticeable by Hannibal at his own point in time. By 'seeing' the full motion range of the tide, Silius crosses from Hannibal's story time to his own narrative time, a metaliterary gesture that draws attention to his own narratorial control of the *Punica*.¹⁷ By illuminating the timeless physical laws that

¹⁵ I have used Duff's (1934) translation with modifications. All other translations are mine.

¹⁶ For the aesthetic implications of *mirari* in the context of ekphrasis, see Muecke (2007) 76. From a Mediterranean perspective, the tidal phenomena of the outer coasts of Europe can often appear extreme. See Dueck, Lindsay, and Potthecary (2005) 37–38.

¹⁷ Similarly, Augoustakis (2003a) 252–54 argues that the mythological insertion of Pyrene into the narrative absorbs the historical time of Hannibal's mountain crossing and foreshadows his fortunes.

govern this phenomenon, Silius also suggests its repetitive regularity spanning the three centuries between the story time and the narrating time of the *Punica*.¹⁸ Moreover, Silius' image of the stranded ship (3.56–57) conveys a timeless, gnomic truth about human *aporia* and powerlessness against the natural elements. Thus it further transcends Hannibal's linear and narrow vision and heightens the distorted temporality of the tidal ekphrasis.

Finally, Silius' alternative and overlapping explanations of the tide which draw from mythology, religion, and natural science, contrast to Hannibal's astounded gaze and hermeneutical limitations. The epic simile of Neptune (*ceu...pontum*, 3.53–54) and the mythical images of Nereus and Cymothoe, recalling the storm in *Aeneid* 1, coexist with standard technical vocabulary of tidal treatises (*aestus*, 3.55; *reciproca*, 3.60).¹⁹ Silius' blend of mythology and natural science finds an apt expression in his explanation of the tides as a result of the gravitational pull of the moon (*luna...Tethys*, 3.59–60). Accepted widely in antiquity as the cause of the tides, the moon is portrayed here as an anthropomorphic figure riding her chariot in the sky and pulling the ocean along.²⁰ Silius then, unlike Hannibal who looks on, but does not truly 'see' the tides, is able to visualize both the physical and the metaphysical waterscape of Gades. Mediating between Hannibal's gaze and that of the audience, he frames a second, inclusive, ekphrasis within the first, rather than merely "a general impression of the tides and their ebb and flow."²¹ Through this second privileged view, accessible to the audience but not to Hannibal, Silius suggests his superior understanding of natural laws and divine forces effecting the phenomenal world which includes Hannibal. Silius establishes his authorial omniscience and his interpretative control over the character of his protagonist and his interaction with the world around him.

¹⁸ I borrow the landmark terms 'story,' 'narrative,' and 'narrating' from Genette (1980) 27 and *passim*.

¹⁹ For a discussion on Virgil's "synthesis of the real and the visionary" in the storm in *Aen.* 1, see Williams (1972) 161; cf. Silius' tides with *Aen.* 1.125–26, 1.144, 2.418, 5.826, and 10.225. For technical terminology of tides, cf. Plin. *Nat.* 2.212, 2.213, 2.217, 32. On the influence of Pliny the Elder's *Nat.* and Seneca's *Nat.* 3 (*De aquis terrestribus*) on Silius' water motifs, see Santini (1991) 102–13.

²⁰ On the ancients' connection between the moon and the tides, see Eckenrode (1975) 273–76; Spaltenstein (1986) 184.

²¹ Gibson (2005) 184.

Silius reinforces his authority as a natural scientist through an intra-textual gesture that connects himself to one of the most legendary scientists of the ancient world, Archimedes.²² In his eulogy of Archimedes, Silius summarizes the Greek mathematician's understanding of cosmic mysteries in words that recall his own explication of the tides:

Vir fuit Isthmiacis decus immortale colonis,
ingenio facile ante alios telluris alumnos,
nudus opum, sed cui caelum terraeque paterent.
ille, nouus pluuias Titan ut proderet ortu
fuscatis tristis radiis, ille, haereat anne
pendeat instabilis tellus, cur foedere certo
hunc affusa globum Tethys circumliget undis,
nouerat atque una pelagi lunaeque labores,
et pater Oceanus qua lege effunderet aestus. (*Pun.* 14.341–49)

There was a man who sheds immortal glory on the Syracusans, a man who easily surpassed with his genius other sons of earth. He was without wealth, but the secrets of heaven and earth were revealed to him. He knew how the rising sun portended rain when it was gloomy with dull rays; he knew whether the earth is fixed where it stands or shifts its position. He knew why the Ocean surrounds the world with its waves by an unalterable treaty, he understood the struggles between the moon and the sea, and by what law father Ocean pours out his tides.

Silius contrasts Archimedes' material poverty to his rich understanding of natural mysteries, a beatitude highly evocative of Lucretius' praise of Epicurus.²³ In this context of natural science, Silius stresses Archimedes' command of hydrology. Four out of the six lines enumerating Archimedes' scientific expertise relate to the water cycle, essential equipment of the natural scientist from Aristotle onwards.²⁴ Archimedes comprehends the solar forecast of rain, the cosmic boundary of Tethys, the physical oceanography of tides, and the consistent and dependable laws that govern these grandeurs of nature (*foedere certo*, 14.346; *qua lege*, 14.349). The last two lines are devoted exclusively to the tides and crown his epistemic access to natural mysteries. Archimedes'

²² On Archimedes' contribution to the defense of Syracuse during Marcellus' naval siege, see Lancel (1998) 124–25. For his role in the *Punica*, see Scaffai (2004). On Archimedes' influence on the Roman imagination, see Jaeger (2008) and especially 77–122 for a discussion on the siege of Syracuse, including Silius' narrative.

²³ Cf. Lucr. 1.62–79; 3.1–30; 5.1–54; 6.1–42 with Buchheit (1971). For a summary of Lucretius' influence on later poets, see Hardie (2007).

²⁴ On Aristotle's *Mete.* as a turning point in ancient hydrology, see Biswas (1970) 61–103.

tidal knowledge (*una pelagi lunaeque labores... aestus*, 14.348–49) strengthens Silius' own confident explanation of tides as the result of the lunar pull (*aestu... pelagique labores/Luna mouet, Luna...*, 3.55, 3.58–59). The expression *pelagi labores* is the focal point in these two passages, both of which also feature a blended scientific and mythological explanation of the tides (*Oceanus fontis torrentibus ingruit undis... aestu*, 3.52–55 ~ *Oceanus qua lege effunderet aestus*, 14.349), and a reference to the primordial Tethys (*Tethys*, 3.60 ~ *Tethys*, 14.347). Silius therefore bolsters his authority as a poet-naturalist by aligning Archimedes' authority to his own explication of the tides. Far from being "a rather surprising eulogy of Archimedes,"²⁵ Silius' tribute to the Greek mathematician enables him to vest with authority his own interpretation of the world. By echoing the legendary scientist, Silius claims a confident and scientific grasp on the events he narrates, particularly of Hannibal's visual and cognitive gaze.²⁶

Silius strengthens his exegetical authority through intertextual layers of other tidal narratives that extend his nod to Archimedes. Specifically, Virgil is a natural resource of tidal allusions for Silius, given his influence on tidal terminology and the Flavian poet's debt to the *Aeneid*.²⁷ Virgil is particularly important for Silius' description of the Atlantic tides since the key phrase *lunae labores* is a Virgilian neologism inspired from Lucretius.²⁸ Silius clearly echoes two such Virgilian tides. The first of these is a famous passage from the *Georgics*, which resonates with Lucretian language and themes. Here Virgil claims natural science as his preferred and ambitious subject-matter for poetry, an aspiration he simultaneously embraces and declines proclaiming his unsuitability for the lofty topics of cosmology.²⁹ In this context, Virgil summarizes the questions of natural science as follows:

²⁵ See Schrijvers (2006) 110.

²⁶ On the conceptual overlap between visual and epistemic gaze, see Salzman-Mitchell (2005) 56–57, 102–3, 109–10.

²⁷ On the influence of Virgil and Horace on later tidal narratives, see Eckenrode (1975) 272.

²⁸ Thomas (1988) 251, Mynors (1990) 167, and Scaffai (2002) 453 agree that Virgil's *lunae labores* is a paraphrase of Lucretius' *lunaeque latebras* (5.751). Lucretius uses *labor* not for natural phenomena but for human travails, especially the vain struggles for wealth and power. On the influence of Lucretian *labor* on the *Georgics*, see Farrell (1991) 180–84; Gale (2000) 143–54; Volk (2002) 119–39.

²⁹ For Virgil's *recusatio* of the natural sciences in this context, see Ross (1987) 228–30, Gale (2000) 42.

Me uero primum dulces ante omnia Musae,
 quarum sacra fero ingenti percussus amore,
 accipiant caelique uias et sidera monstrent,
 defectus solis uarios lunaeque labores;
 unde tremor terris, qua ui maria alta tumescant
 obicibus ruptis rursusque in se ipsa residant,
 quid tantum Oceano properent se tingere soles
 hiberni, uel quae tardis mora noctibus obstet. (G. 2.475–82)

But as for me, first above all may the sweet Muses, whose holy emblems I carry struck by a great love, receive me and show me the paths of heaven, the stars, the sun's eclipses and the moon's different struggles; whence the trembling of the earth, under what compulsion the deep seas swell and break their barriers, then sink back upon themselves; why winter suns hasten so fast to dip in the Ocean, or what delays hinder the lingering nights.

Virgil reiterates this theme almost verbatim in *Aeneid* 1. During Dido's welcome feast for the Trojans, the bard Iopas unravels in his song the following *ekphrasis cosmologica*:³⁰

hic canit errantem lunam solisque labores,
 unde hominum genus et pecudes, unde imber et ignes,
 Arcturum pluuiasque Hyadas geminosque Triones,
 quid tantum Oceano properent se tingere soles
 hiberni, uel quae tardis mora noctibus obstet; (Aen. 1.742–46)

He sings of the wandering moon and the sun's struggles: whence sprang humankind and the animals, whence rain and fire; of Arcturus, the rainy Hyades and the twin bears; why winter suns hasten so fast to dip in the Ocean, or what delays hinder the lingering nights.

Scholars have long identified Virgil's self-imitation which hinges upon the common description of planetary phenomena as *labores* (*lunaeque labores*, G. 2.478 ~ *lunam solisque labores*, Aen. 1.742).³¹ More importantly, the combined reading of these two passages reveals Virgil's metaliterary gesture: the connection between the moon and the tides features among cosmic secrets only glimpsed by Virgil in his *propria persona*, but fully accessible to the fictional Iopas, who molds them into song. Through palpable intertextuality with Apollonius Rhodius, the

³⁰ See Scaffai (2002) 449 and also (2004) 500 (discussing the similarities between the two scenes in books 3 and 14).

³¹ Williams (1972) 213; Thomas (1988) 250–51; Scaffai (2002) 454. On the role of Iopas' song within the context of Aen. 1, see Scaffai (2002) 455–56 who argues that the song contrasts the eternal cosmic balance to Dido's all too human inner turmoil.

Virgilian Iopas himself is vested with the transcendental knowledge of the poet-prophet-naturalist Orpheus.³² On the other hand, Virgil's own poetic *recusatio* in the *Georgics* hearkens back to the language and themes of Lucretius' quintessential poem of natural science.³³ Without delving too far into Virgil's poetics, we can venture that he depicts his ideal poet as endowed with privileged knowledge of natural laws, specifically the laws of hydrology.³⁴ The cosmic insights of such a bard are partly summarized in his understanding of the tides as a result of interactions between heavenly and earthly bodies. In both the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*, the brief tidal ekphrases are intersections between the author and his fictional character, the epic poet and the natural scientist, the internal characters and the external audience, and, ultimately, the inexplicability of the mute natural world and the exegetic eloquence of its literary representation.

The Virgilian expression *lunae (solis) labores* is clearly at the root of the two *Punica* passages discussed above, but Virgil's self-imitation and met-literary gestures must also be considered as part of Silius' negotiation of Virgil.³⁵ Virgil's request to the Muses to open the routes of heaven recalls Archimedes' access to heavenly secrets (*caelique...monstrent*, *G.* 2.477 ~ *caelum...paterent*, 14.343), while it echoes Silius' own aspiration to unlock divine intelligence (*fas aperire mihi superasque recludere mentes*, 1.19). Similarly, the Muses' awareness of natural forces evokes Archimedes' scientific understanding (*qua ui*, *G.* 2.479 ~ *qua lege*, 14.349). Thus Silius' authoritative description of the Atlantic tides hints at a composite self-portrait containing the accumulated scientific capital of his predecessors, both historical (Archimedes, Lucretius, Virgil) and fictional (Orpheus, Iopas). Endowed with a perception of the physical *cosmos* comparable to that of Archimedes, Silius also aligns himself with the poetic authority of Virgil.³⁶ But whereas Virgil declines to follow Lucretius in expounding natural wonders and instead relegates

³² For Iopas' connection to Apollonius' Orpheus and Homer's Demodocus, see Putnam (1998) 51–54; Nelis (2001) 96–112.

³³ On the Lucretian pedigree of Virgil's *recusatio* in *G.* 2, see Thomas (1988) 250–51 and Scaffai (2002) 449.

³⁴ Cf. *G.* 2.489 and its Lucretian echoes in Thomas (1988) 253.

³⁵ To my knowledge there is no such discussion. For a list of later imitations of Virgil's *lunae (solis) labores*, see Richter (1977) 101–5; Spaltenstein (1986) 184; Scaffai (2002) 463–64. For the connections between Archimedes' praise (14.341–349) and the Virgilian passages, see the brief comments in Spaltenstein (1990) 175 and Scaffai (2002) 463.

³⁶ Silius claims a similar knowledge for Homer (13.788).

that transcendental knowledge to the Orphic Iopas, Silius does take up that challenge.³⁷ Whereas Iopas' tidal song substitutes for Virgil's own *recusatio*, Archimedes' cosmic insights clearly complement Silius' own.

As stated above, this alignment with Archimedes extends Silius' authority beyond the realm of epic poetry, into the realm of natural science. Silius' negotiation of the tidal experience as a litmus test that discerns between merely looking at the *cosmos* and truly comprehending its laws is confirmed through a passage from another natural scientist, Seneca:

Iam uero si quis obseruauerit nudari litora pelago in se recedente eademque intra exiguum tempus operiri, credet caeca quadam uoluntatione modo contrahi undas et introrsum agi, modo erumpere et magno cursu repetere sedem suam, cum interim illae portionibus crescunt et ad horam ac diem subeunt ampliores minoresque, prout illas lunare sidus elicuit, ad cuius arbitrium oceanus exundat. (Sen. *Dial.* 1.1.4)³⁸

Moreover, if anyone observes how the shores are laid bare as the sea withdraws into itself, and how within a short time the same stretches are covered over again, he will suppose that it is by some blind fluctuation that the waves now shrink and flow inwards, now sally forth and in a great sweep seek their former resting place. Whereas, in fact, they increase by degrees, and true to the hour and the day they approach in proportionately as larger or smaller according to how the star we call moon attracts them, at the will of which the Ocean swells.

Seneca uses a tidal depiction to exemplify the difference between uninformed experiential vision and informed scientific perception. He contrasts the mere observation of the tides by the unsuspecting viewer, who believes the tidal motion to be random, to his own rational explanation of the consistency, symmetry, and cause of the phenomenon.³⁹ Seneca's expression *caeca uoluntatione* implies, through hypallage, the visual and cognitive blindness of the observer who looks on but does not really 'see' the tides. In Seneca's philosophical-naturalistic vision, the proper understanding of the tides enables the informed observer

³⁷ Contrast Lucan (1.409–19) who describes the tides but proclaims his refusal to explore their causes, relegating this task to others instead. On the conflation of the natural and supernatural essences of a phenomenon in Lucan, see Schrijvers (2005) 33–39; for a summary on intertextuality between Lucan and Silius, see Tipping (2007) 225 with notes; Brouwers (1982); and extensively Marks in this volume (127–53).

³⁸ On Seneca's Lucretian influences cf. *Nat.* 6.5.2 and *Dial.* 8.5.6; see Althoff (2005) 9–34.

³⁹ For commentary on this passage, see Viansino (1968) 66–67; Andreoni (1971) 84; Traina (1997) 85.

to break the misleading randomness, linear time, and restricted space of the phenomenal world. Having superseded his sensory confines, he will then truly see the invisible and timeless principles of nature which are rational and consistent. In the same vein, Silius contrasts Hannibal's momentary vision and epistemic blindness to his own description that integrates the space, time, and hermeneutics of the tides.

The intertextual web of Silius' tides would not be complete without Livy. One tidal episode in Livy's narrative is particularly important for Silius, because it describes the tides of Gibraltar, the same tides seen by Hannibal in *Punica* 3.⁴⁰ In the narrative of the surrender of Gades to the Romans in 206 BC (Liv. 28.30), Livy recounts how Mago's brief absence from Gades precipitates the locals' surrender of the city to the Romans. The Roman general Laelius is on the verge of accepting the surrender of Gades, when Mago uncovers the intentions of the city's inhabitants, arrests the ringleaders, and hands them over to his general Adherbal to be deported to Carthage. As the Punic ships enter the Gibraltar straits, Laelius, who is stationed with his fleet in a nearby port town, begins to pursue Adherbal's fleet. Soon, however, the tides take over both fleets, resulting in a very dubious naval engagement:

Aestus quoque arbitrium moderandi naues ademerat; neque erat nauali pugna similis, quippe ubi nihil uoluntarium, nihil artis aut consilii esset. Vna natura freti aestusque totius certaminis potens suis, alienis nauibus nequiquam remigio in contrarium tendentes inuehebat; et fugientem nauem uideres, uertice retro intortam uictoribus inlatam, et sequentem, si in contrarium tractum incidisset maris, fugientis modo sese auertentem. Iam in ipsa pugna haec cum infesta rostro peteret hostium nauem, obliqua ipsa ictum alterius rostri accipiebat: illa cum transuersa obiceretur hosti, repente intorta in proram circumagebatur. Cum inter triremes fortuna regente anceps proelium misceretur, quinqueremis Romana seu pondere tenacior seu pluribus remorum ordinibus scindentibus uertices cum facilius regeretur, duas triremes suppressit, unius, praelata impetu, lateris alterius remos deterisit; ceterasque quas indepta esset mulcasset, ni cum reliquis quinque nauibus Adherbal uelis in Africam transmisisset. Laelius uictor Carteiam reuectus. (Liv. 28.30.8–31.1)

Besides, the tide took away the control of navigating the ships. Neither was it a typical naval battle, since there was nothing done willingly, no

⁴⁰ Here I follow Gibson (2005) 177–78, who discusses the historic resonances of the Gades surrender (Liv. 28.37.10) in *Punica* 3, but without reference to the tides. Another important tidal episode in Livy is Scipio's capture of New Carthage in 210 BC (26.42–46). See Lovejoy (1972) 110–11.

skill or plan. Together the nature of the straights and the tide were in control of the entire engagement carrying vessels on to friends or enemies indiscriminately despite the efforts of the crews to keep them off. You could see a vessel trying to escape pursuit swinging right round and swept head-on against her victorious pursuers, and a vessel giving chase might, if it fell into a contrary current of the sea, turn on its stern like a fugitive. When they were in actual combat, a ship trying to ram an enemy would turn on its side and be rammed herself by the ram of another ship; or another, with her side exposed to the enemy, would suddenly swing and drive its prow to the attack. Chance ruled; but while the triremes were engaged in this indecisive manner, the Roman quinquereme, either steadier because of her weight, or controlling the current more easily because of her more numerous banks of oars rowing, sank two triremes and, carried by the rip, sheered off the oars from one side of a third. She might have damaged seriously any others she closed in but Adherbal with the five remaining ships had set sail for the African coast. Laelius returned to Carteia victorious.

Livy condenses the entire tidal cycle from several hours into a few minutes, unfolding ekphrastically before his audience's eyes (*uideres*) the ambivalent, varied, and ever changing fortunes of the two combatants:⁴¹ Pursuers turn suddenly into pursued, winners to losers, while fortune rules everything (*fortuna regente, anceps proelium*). Livy's dramatic account of the engagement is less realistic and more attuned to his programmatic statement about the roles of *uaria fortuna* and *anceps Mars* in the Hannibalic war (Liv. 21.1). This historical description of the Gades tides contextualizes the tidal ekphrasis in *Punica* 3, collapsing mythical and historical time onto Hannibal's moment.⁴² Silius' audience, who views the Gades tides through Hannibal, already knows from Livy that these same tides will soon betray Hannibal by expelling the Carthaginians from Spain and giving victory to the Romans. Livy's tidal narrative pins Hannibal's cognitive blindness onto the specific historical moment of the (future) Second Punic War and conflates cosmic laws with historical necessity. Standing at Gades, Hannibal is unaware of the historical importance of his location, as he is ignorant of his own place in the grand narrative of Roman fate. In sum, Silius uses

⁴¹ For *uideres*, *aspiceret*, *cerneret*, among others, as common in ekphrastic contexts, see Gilmartin (1975) and Breed (2000) 332.

⁴² For the synchronic and vertical time of the *Punica*, where past and present often merge, see Dominik (2003) 471. For a similar episode of narrative compression of history, see McGuire (1995). On the Hellenistic tradition of conflating geography and historiography, in which the temporal and spatial aspects of a location are overlaid, see Clarke (1999) 1–76.

the rich epic, scientific, philosophical, and historiographical capital of tides to contrast the mute detachment of the world as perceived by Hannibal to the eloquently diegetic *cosmos* of his own vision. By illuminating the 'sight' behind the 'site,' Silius establishes himself as the authority explicating the elemental forces that influence Hannibal's choices with or without his knowledge.

The very liminality of Gades renders it an appropriate space for Silius' metapoetical gesture.⁴³ Facing the Atlantic, the end of the Mediterranean world, the straits of Gibraltar capture the ancient imagination as "the land where reality ends and everything is fabulous."⁴⁴ As a semi-fictional space between the familiar here and the fantastic beyond, Gades is the appropriate intersection of the various sources of the epic, the overlapping temporal layers of its story, narrative, and narrating, and, finally, the character complexity and agency of its protagonist, Hannibal.⁴⁵ Turning from Silius' gaze of the tides to that of Hannibal, I will now illustrate how his limited perception of the physical and metaphysical landscape of Gibraltar affects his fortunes later in the *Punica*.

3. *Flow*

So far I have argued that Silius' description of the Gades tides lends his authorial voice a metaphysical insight into cosmic laws that are unseen by Hannibal himself. By establishing his authoritative and omniscient voice early in the epic, Silius makes certain claims about Hannibal's narrow visual and epistemic vision. In order to identify these claims, we need first to refocus on what Hannibal sees, or rather he thinks he sees, in the Atlantic tides.⁴⁶ In this part of my discussion, I turn from Silius' tidal interpretation to that of Hannibal, to explore the factual and symbolical resonances of the tides as they relate to his character, his choices, and his fortunes in the *Punica*.

⁴³ For the long tradition of Gades as the limit of the known world, Della Corte (1989); Romm (1992) 17–26; Gibson (2005) 179. Silius stresses the liminality of Gades in 1.141, 3.3–4, 7.108, 14.8, 15.638, 16.149.

⁴⁴ Pocock (1962) 7. On the Roman conceptualizations of the Atlantic as a boundary, see Paulian (1975) 53–58; Paulian (1976) xii–xiv; Bajard (1998) 177–91.

⁴⁵ For an overview of the question of Hannibal as the hero of the *Punica*, see Tipping (2007) 224.

⁴⁶ Gibson (2005) 193 suggests Hannibal's ignorance by paralleling his visit to Gades to Syphax's memories of a similar journey of leisure (16.194–96).

Critics have already identified the immediate symbolism of the Atlantic tides as a metaphor for "the changing tides of the Punic war."⁴⁷ Indeed the broad metaphor of the sea as an allegory of human transience originates in Greek literature, and is particularly at home in Roman Stoicism.⁴⁸ But how exactly does this general idea materialize within the specific context of Hannibal's tidal experience? In other words, how does Hannibal decode the tides, and how does his vision connect to his fortunes later in the epic? I submit that Hannibal experiences a self-recognition in the tide, seeing himself and his campaign as the surging wave that will sweep over the Italian lands.⁴⁹

Hannibal's self-identification with the rising tide begins to emerge once we turn to Silius' key phrase *pelagi labores* (3.58). The significance of *labor* in *Punica* 3 for Hannibal's self-perception and imitation of Hercules has long been established.⁵⁰ Therefore Silius' notable repetition of *labor* in such close narrative proximity to the ekphrasis of the Herakleion is meaningful for Hannibal. Since Hannibal identifies with the Herculean *labores*, it follows that he sees something of his own military surge in the violent *labores* of the sea, the tidal peak flooding the Gades coast. The *pelagi labores* at Gades are certainly warlike, with the tides presented as "a battle of the natural elements."⁵¹

On the other hand, the assimilation of a strong army to a sea surge is as old as Homer.⁵² Throughout the *Punica*, Silius exploits the semantics of this metaphor in his portrayal of Hannibal. In the battle of Saguntum, Hannibal is likened to a huge wave sweeping the plane (*talis...fluctus*, 1.468–69); the Saguntine ambassadors warn the Roman senate that Hannibal will dash from Calpe onto the Italian cities like a foaming wave (*spumeus...fluctus*, 1.646). Hanno warns the Carthaginian

⁴⁷ Schrijvers (2006) 108–9; see also Vessey (1982a) 323.

⁴⁸ On the symbolism of sea in Stoic thought, see Viljamaa (1979) and especially 171; Mader (1988); Massaro (1988–89); Ronnick (1995).

⁴⁹ For self-recognition as an important function of the gaze, see Salzman-Mitchell (2005) 6.

⁵⁰ On the prominence of *labor* to describe Hannibal's Herculean activities, see Vessey (1982a) 326–29; Augoustakis (2003a) 238; Muecke (2007) 88.

⁵¹ Muecke (2007) 74.

⁵² *Il.* 14.384–95. Cf. Luc. 1.100–6, who assimilates Caesar and Pompey to the Ionian and Aegean seas respectively, kept apart by Crassus, who is likened to the Isthmus of Corinth. Caesar also likens himself to an endless sea (Luc. 5.336–39). For the influence of Lucan's Caesar on Silius' Hannibal, see Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2511–19; Gibson (2005) 187–92. Seneca (*Thy.* 111–14, 124) also assimilates Atrous and Thyestes to two turbulent seas separated by the Isthmus of Corinth. See Tarrant (1985) 104, 107.

senate that he has had his eye on Hannibal for a long time, just as the watchman of a ship monitors the fury of the sea (*uenturam pelagi rabiem*, 2.290). Hannibal and his army are likened to Neptune and his train gliding to the outermost sea (*extremam... Tethyn*, 3.411). Hannibal himself complains that Fabius hinders his rushing fates (*fatis... meis currentibus*, 7.307), presumably alluding to sea currents.⁵³ Moreover, the Ocean itself, encircling the known world, symbolizes boundless movement, a constituent element of Hannibal's self-perception. Finally the direction of the tide, from west to east, is the same as Hannibal's projected march from Spain and thus another unifying element between the tides and Hannibal himself.⁵⁴

Yet Hannibal's vision of the tides is inadequate in spatial, temporal, and hermeneutical terms. Moreover, it is inattentive, because Hannibal looks on hastily (*propere spectata*, 3.61). Since Silius routinely obscures time in his epic, the temporal index *propere* becomes all the more meaningful for the characterization of Hannibal and his fortunes.⁵⁵ Hannibal does not linger enough to see that the onrushing waves soon subside and withdraw from the land, nor does he understand the celestial forces that regulate the symmetrical movement of high and low tide. Therefore his identification with the *pelagi labores* is bound to be erroneous and misleading, similar to his misdirected identification with the Herculean *labores* earlier in the narrative. Hannibal mistakenly identifies himself with the momentum of the incoming tide, seeing his fortunes in a permanent state of flow. Thus he misses the implications of the other half of the tidal oscillation, that is, that he too is subject to unseen laws that can cause his ebb. These laws, familiar to Silius himself as we saw above, are expressed in terms of cosmic and historical necessity.

This idea of a double compulsion confining Hannibal's ambition becomes clear once we contrast his wish-fulfilling fantasy of the tides

⁵³ Cf. Lucan's description of Pompey's inner turmoil as both *labor* and *aestus* (8.165–66). For other marine similes describing armies in the *Punica*, see e.g., 5.395–400; 5.503; 8.426–27; 9.282–86; 9.319–20; 15.713–14.

⁵⁴ Vessey (1975) 391, 404 compares the depiction of Ebro (a limited river) on Hannibal's shield to the Ocean (a boundless river) on Achilles' shield, and notes the ominous presage of this restriction. Similarly, he parallels Hannibal's move from West to East to Alexander's campaigns. On this parallel, see also Schrijvers (2006) 108.

⁵⁵ Gibson (2005) 184 notes that *propere* is perplexing, without further comment. On Silius' elision of historical time through ekphrasis, aetiology, narrative compression, and omission, see Wallace (1968); Wilson (1993) 230–31; Augoustakis (2003a) 253.

to the clear tidal vision of Hanno, the elder Carthaginian statesman who denounces Hannibal in the Punic senate (2.276–326). Livy gives Hanno an eloquent speech (21.10), making the case against Hannibal. There, among his arguments, Hanno reminds his compatriots of the disastrous naval battle of the Aegates islands which concluded the First Punic War. Silius develops this Livian image, presenting the tides through Hanno's eyes as a cautionary tale for Carthage's future:

nos ratibus laceris Scyllaea repleuimus antra
classibus et refluo spectauimus aequore raptis
contorta e fundo reuomentem transtra Charybdin.
respice, pro demens, pro pectus inane deorum,
Aegatis Libyaeque procul fluitantia membra!
quo ruis et patriae exitio tibi nomina quaeris? (Pun. 2.306–11)

We filled Scylla's caverns with wrecked vessels; and when our fleets were borne away by the receding sea, we saw Charybdis whirling the rowers' benches round and spouting them forth from her depths. Madman, godless in your heart, look back at the Aegates islands and the limbs of Libya drifting far away! Where are you rushing, seeking fame for yourself by the fall of your country?

Through vivid deictic rhetoric, Hanno conjures the spectacle of the sea scattering the debris of the Punic fleet after the battle. He reminds the senators that, once the Sicilian tides retreated (*refluo...aequore*, 2.307), they all witnessed the grim spectacle (*spectauimus*, 2.307). This grim viewing is understood in both physical and perceptual terms. In a direct apostrophe to the absent Hannibal, Hanno commands him to look at the receding tides (*respice*, 2.309) and to contemplate their stern warning for Carthage. Hanno's use of *respicere* in this context is particularly illuminating, given its temporal, spatial, and cognitive associations. Literally meaning "looking back," *respicere* dramatizes Hanno's appeal to Hannibal re-view the past as a guide for the future.⁵⁶

Moreover, Hanno's indictment of Hannibal's godlessness in this context suggests that the Aegates tides constitute a clear divine message which the disrespectful Hannibal cannot decode.⁵⁷ Hanno's hint at theodicy translates the cosmic determinism of the tides into a specific

⁵⁶ On the cognitive significance of *respicere* in Virgil and Statius, see Pagán (2000) 441–48.

⁵⁷ Imilce utters a similar warning (4.779–802), declaiming against the Carthaginian custom of human sacrifice and cautioning the absent Hannibal against his imperialistic desires. See Augoustakis (2008).

historical exemplarity, the Punic defeat in the previous war.⁵⁸ His deictic account of the Aegates aftermath constitutes an ekphrasis, not a physical but rather a mental one, and as such it belongs to the tidal register that begins at Gades.⁵⁹ Yet just as Hannibal fails to understand the powerful symbolism of the original tidal ekphrasis at Gades, he ignores the warning encoded in the Sicilian tides that conclude the First Punic War. Silius reiterates the particular importance of Hanno's *phantasia* by inserting it again among the murals that Hannibal sees on the walls at Liternum:⁶⁰

addiderant geminas medio consurgere fluctu
 Aegates; lacerae circum fragmenta uideres
 classis et effusus fluitare in gurgite Poenos.
 possessor pelagi pronaque Lutatius aura
 captiuas puppes ad litora uictor agebat. (Pun. 6.684–88)

The artists had added the twin Aegates islands rising in mid-sea; you could see the remnants of a shattered fleet all round, and shipwrecked Carthaginians drifting in the whirlpool. While Lutatius, master of the sea, drove the captured ships ashore with a favorable wind.

Hanno's *phantasia* and the artistic ekphrasis at Liternum are connected both thematically and verbally (*fluitantia membra*, 2.310 ~ *fluitare... Poenos*, 6.687; *laceris... classibus*, 2.306–7 ~ *lacerae... classis*, 6.685–86). Silius' direct address to his audience in this context (*uideres*, 6.685) brings awareness to the cognitive process necessary to properly 'read' this an admonitory image of Punic destruction.⁶¹ It also evokes Hanno's appeal to the didactic powers of true vision (*spectauimus... respice*, 2.307–9), which goes unheeded by Hannibal. Reading the fresco instead as an insult, Hannibal becomes incensed at its cautionary implications and continues on his war path (6.698–99). Silius, the "all-knowing narrator," embeds in the narrative a very clear tidal signal for Hannibal, who chooses to ignore it as his is borne on his own tide of success.⁶²

⁵⁸ On Hannibal's godlessness, cf. Liv. 21.4.9.

⁵⁹ On the definition of *phantasia* in ancient rhetoric manuals as imaginative actualization, and on its connection with ekphrasis and *enargeia*, see Salzman-Mitchell (2005), 4–5 and 15.

⁶⁰ See Harrison's analysis in this volume (287–89).

⁶¹ Cf. Livy's *uideres* in the context of the sea-battle at the Gibraltar straits (28.30) and see above, n. 41. The literary archetype of this visual warning is of course Dido's murals in the *Aeneid*; see Putnam (1998) 23–54.

⁶² Fowler (1996) 68 uses this term in the context of the Liternum frescoes, and provides details on the intertextual pedigree of this ekphrasis (63–72).

The above examination suggests that Silius exploits geographical, artistic, and historiographical ekphraseis of tides to give texture to his portrait of Hannibal, and to place his character and his fortunes within the general context of cosmic determinism and historic fatalism that runs through the *Punica*.

4. *Ebb*

Silius pursues the tidal imagery he sets up at Gades to present Hannibal's choices and subsequent declining fortunes. This imagery becomes particularly vivid in the context of Hannibal's stay in Capua, in book 11, which is the turning point in the tide of the war. The idea that "Capua was Hannibal's Cannae" permeates Roman tradition less because of its historical veracity and more because it affords opportunity for a diatribe against luxury.⁶³ Silius follows this classic topos but marks Hannibal's turn of fortunes more specifically, by alluding to the Atlantic tides and to Hannibal's flawed identification of himself with the surge. The tidal motif enables Silius to integrate Hannibal's Capuan experience to the larger context of his self-perception, and to illustrate that Hannibal underestimates the natural, divine, and historical principles that govern his place in the world. Hannibal's transformation is sketched through his visual and cognitive gaze, which gradually becomes subject to the Capuans and their dangerous luxuries.⁶⁴

The main attraction of Hannibal's welcome is a lavish banquet offered by his hosts. The idea of Hannibal's initial corruption at the Capuan feast is present in Livy, whose account does not include details (23.8.6). Silius, however, elaborates on this banquet by adding a center piece to the festivities, a double performance by the local bard Teuthras. His first song (11.288–97) is a brief cosmology that concludes with the city's eponymous founder, Capys. The second is an extensive hymn to the powers of the lyre in the hands of four legendary bards,

⁶³ The saying *Capuam Hannibali Cannas fuisse* is attributed to M. Claudius Marcellus (cf. Liv. 23.45.4 and Flor. *Epit.* 1.22.21). On Hannibal's corruption at Capua, see also Liv. 23.18; Sen. *Ep.* 51.7. For modern, less harsh, interpretations of Hannibal's winter in Capua, see Lancel (1998) 115–16.

⁶⁴ Muecke (2007) 73–80 connects Hannibal's guided tour of city landmarks by the Capuan elders to his tour of the Phlegraean fields with the same group (12.11–157).

Amphion, Arion, Chiron, and Orpheus (11.440–80).⁶⁵ Given the predominance of tidal motifs in the second song, I submit that both the lyre hymn and Teuthras himself constitute another tidal *phantasia*, the warning of which Hannibal misses or willfully ignores.

Teuthras' hymn to the lyre is replete with tidal motifs that begin to emerge even before the song begins. While the first song on the genealogy of Capys is introduced without comment (11.288), the circumstances of the second, longer song are more detailed. Teuthras chooses this song among many (*haec e multis carpsit*, 11.439), after he observes Hannibal's initial reaction to his first performance:

imprimis dulcem Poeno laetante per aures
nunc uoce infundit Teuthras, nunc pectine cantum.
isque ubi mirantem resonantia pollice fila
ductorem uidit Libyae, canere inde superbas
Aoniae laudes sensim testudinis orsus... (Pun. 11.432–36)

As Hannibal rejoiced, Teuthras above all pours into his ears the sweet music both of the voice and of the lyre. He, when he saw the leader of Libya marveling at the sound his fingers drew from the strings, he began leisurely to sing the proud triumphs of the Aonian lyre...

This is a striking reversal of Hannibal as a subject of gaze, compared to his independent visual agency at Gades (*mira...cernit...spectata*, 3.46–61). His fascinated viewing (*mirantem*) of Teuthras' previous songs renders him the object of Teuthras' vision (*uidit*), who, perceiving his vulnerability to music, seduces him further with his second song. Silius breaks tellingly the combination *ductorem Libyae* with Teuthras' objectifying *uidit*, and this iconic semantization reminds us of the public obligations that Hannibal seems to have forgotten in his private leisure. Silius indicates clearly that Teuthras' choice of this second song is his conscious response to Hannibal's initial infatuation with his first performance.

Various elements cast Hannibal's reaction to Teuthras' song as a replay of his gaze on the Atlantic tides. His aesthetic reaction to both is similar: he marvels (*mirantem*, 11.434) at the bard's song, as he marvels at the tides earlier (*mira cernit*, 3.46). Teuthras' effect on Hannibal's auditory senses is described as *infundit*, which suggests the flood of

⁶⁵ For a discussion of both songs, see Schenk (1989) and Bettenworth (2004), 361–71. Schenk interprets the lyre generally as symbol of luxury and therefore decline in Hannibal's army.

waters inland as seen in parallel tidal descriptions (*infuso...aequore*, 3.48 ~ *adfusa...Tethys*, 14.347 ~ *Oceanus...effunderet aestus*, 14.349).⁶⁶ Moreover, much of Teuthras' song is concerned with tidal themes. Three out of the four legendary bards mentioned are credited with thaumaturgic powers over the sea. Arion calms the sea with his lyre (*turbatum plectro...profundum*, 11.446), and, surprisingly, so does Chiron (*compesceret iras/...pelagi*, 11.451–52). Orpheus too calls out the sea with his song, causing it to meet the stranded Argo (*cantu uenit mare*, 11.472).⁶⁷ Orpheus causes a rising tide, while the *aporia* of the Argonauts before Orpheus' intervention evokes the stranded sailors that Silius imagines in the context of Gades (*expectant aequora nautae*, 3.57). This particular accomplishment of Orpheus, which also originates with Silius, complements those of Arion and Chiron, and strengthens the tidal theme of Teuthras' song.

Furthermore, Teuthras himself contributes to the waterscapes of his song with his own tidal associations. He is first introduced into the narrative as *Cymes/incola* (11.288–89), accompanied by his Euboean lyre (*Euboica...testudine*, 11.288).⁶⁸ The reference to Euboea certainly invokes the most notable feature of its natural geography, the shifting currents of the Euripus strait.⁶⁹ In addition, Teuthras' intertextual connection with Apollonius' Orpheus and Virgil's Iopas (given their own tidal background) adds texture to his own portrait as a singer and bringer of tides.⁷⁰ Yet Hannibal, who identifies with the high tides, ignores Teuthras' warning that the seduction of the lyre can turn the sea, just as he misses the ebb of the Atlantic earlier. Much like Hanno's tidal admonition, Teuthras' song is a perceptual ekphrasis, a *phantasia*, which cautions Hannibal of the potency of song even as it enacts this

⁶⁶ On *infudere* as applied to both speech and liquids, see *OLD* s.v. *infundo* 1 and 6. Silius uses it commonly for speech (8.167, 9.123, 11.70–71).

⁶⁷ Bruère (1959) 234–35 shows how Silius' innovation on Chiron's taming of the sea and the underworld facilitates the transition to Orpheus, who is traditionally associated with these domains. In Virgil's *Georgics*, Orpheus is "the figure who understands and controls nature, the representative of 'scientific' poetry" (Thomas [1988] 253). On Orpheus as a political-prophetic *uates* in Flavian poetry, see Lovatt (2007). For Silius' innovation on the Orphic tradition with the Argo episode, see Spaltenstein (1990) 138.

⁶⁸ On the connection between Cyme and Chalcis, see Spaltenstein (1990) 123.

⁶⁹ On the tides of Euripus, see Tsimplis (1997) 91 and Morwood (2001).

⁷⁰ On these intertextual connections and the archetype of Homer's Demodocus, see Schenk (1989) 352–53.

potency on him.⁷¹ Similarly to its intratextual parallels, this ekphrastic caveat too goes unheeded by Hannibal.

Teuthras' song elides the winter in Capua and summarizes its adverse effects on the morale of Hannibal's men.⁷² Mago's appeal to the Carthaginian senate to support Hannibal (11.483–611), which follows immediately after the song, provides an interesting foil.⁷³ Unaware of the Capuan luxury trap, as dramatized in Teuthras' tidal *phantasia*, Mago claims confidently his eye-witness experience of Hannibal's victories (*uidi...uidi...uidi*, 11.521–26).⁷⁴ Mago's vision, albeit accurate, is already obsolete because it does not represent the current state of affairs in Hannibal's army. Hannibal's own vision, flawed to begin with at Gades, has failed to perceive how his self-indulgence at Capua precipitates the turn of his tide.

After Capua, Hannibal's dynamic campaign turns gradually from offensive to ineffective, and eventually defensive. In the beginning of book 12, he attacks towns in the Campanian countryside, but the change in himself and his army is now notable.⁷⁵ Unable to capture Naples and Cumae, Hannibal turns his attention to a third city, Puteoli, with no better luck. Silius marks the turning point in Hannibal's campaign in tidal terms, clearly evoking his well established motif:

ingemit aduersis respectansque irrita tecta
 urbe Dicarchea parat exsatiare dolorem.
 hic quoque nunc pelagus, nunc muri saxea moles
 officit audenti defensantumque labores.
 dumque tenet socios dura atque obsaepta uiarum
 rumpere nitentes lentus labor, ipse propinqua
 stagnorum terraeque simul miracula lustrat. (Pun. 12.106–12)

⁷¹ On Teuthras' narrative enactment of the power of song over Hannibal, see Schenk (1989) 367.

⁷² The narrative of Capua ends tellingly on the note of Teuthras' song 'breaking' the men: *uirorum/pectora Castalio frangebat carmine Teuthras* (11.481–82).

⁷³ Hoyos (2003) 136–37 argues that "the tide began to turn in Italy" in 212 BC, nearly four years after the stay in Capua. This is a prime example of Silius' elision of historical time through ekphrasis.

⁷⁴ Mago's report harkens to a previous power struggle of vision in the Punic senate. Contrast Hanno's *uidi...uidi* (2.323–24) to Gestar's *uidi...uidi* (2.340–43) and *adspice...adspice* (2.347–49).

⁷⁵ Cf. the soldiers' physical inertia (*membra fluebant*, 12.19) to Hanno's vision of the Aegates (*fluitantia membra*, 2.310; *fluitare...Poenos*, 6.686), and the aftermath of Trasi-mene (*fluitantia...cadauera*, 6.12–13).

He groans at his adversity; and looking back at the town besieged in vain, he prepares to satiate his anger on the city of Dicaearchus. But here too, now the sea, now the massive stone-wall and the struggle of the defenders foiled his daring. And, while a long struggle detains his men as they attempt to force a difficult and obstructed passage, he himself surveys the wonders of the neighboring waters and land.

The semantic constituents of the high tides of Gades are present here, but their different arrangement draws attention to the ebb of Hannibal's circumstances. The earlier expression *pelagi labores* (3.58) describes Silius' interpretation of the Atlantic tides as a result of the lunar pull, a connection that Hannibal himself cannot discern. The significant words *pelagus* and *labor* are present here too, but they represent the inanimate and animate agents hindering Hannibal's efforts. Moreover, Hannibal's trademark word *labor* is used twice in this passage (*defensantumque labores*, 12.109; *lentus labor*, 12.111), without describing Hannibal in either case. Applied to the struggles of both Hannibal's men and the Puteolans, *labor* in this case leaves Hannibal poignantly excluded from his own campaign and his previous momentum. Conversely, Hannibal's captivated gaze of the Atlantic (*mira cernit*, 3.46), implying his wishful identification with the tidal bore, is now turned inland, to the placid waters of the nearby lakes (*stagnorum...miracula lustrat*, 12.112). The confinement implied by these waters and the guided tour that frames Hannibal's viewing, contrast starkly to his self-referred gaze of the Atlantic surge. Moreover, Hanno's futile warning to Hannibal to review the minatory message of the Sicilian tides (*respice*, 2.309) is echoed in the latter's frustrated gaze over the impregnable Puteoli (*respectansque*, 12.106). This deconstructed allusion to the Atlantic tides sets up and simultaneously frustrates the audience expectation that Hannibal begins his campaign anew with a second pilgrimage. His inspired but deluded tidal experience cannot be repeated in the infernal context of the Phlegraean fields. Hannibal's abandonment of his soldiers and his escapist tour at this crucial moment suggest his willful ignorance, or denial, of the detrimental effects of Capua on his campaign.

Muecke discusses extensively the topography of Hannibal's Phlegraean excursion and its "dire warning that becomes so much more explicit in the last part of the book."⁷⁶ One aspect of this topography reiterates the tidal imagery and furthers this dire but vain warning;

⁷⁶ Muecke (2007) 90; see also Klaassen in this volume on Virgilian allusions in the episode (107–13).

Silius concludes Hannibal's trip in a ring composition, with language that vividly recalls the struggle for Puteoli. This description too evokes the programmatic vision at Gades, which exemplifies Hannibal's blind ambition and his ignorance of cosmic signals:

necnon Misenum seruantem Idaea sepulcro
nomina et Herculeos uidet ipso in litore Baulos.
miratur pelagique minas terraeque labores.

Quae postquam perspecta uiro...
hinc at Chalcidicam transfert citus agmina Nola.

(*Pun.* 12.155–58, 161)

He also saw Misenum, which preserves the name of the Trojan who lies buried there, and Bauli, built by Hercules by the sea itself. He looks with wonder at the threats of the sea and the struggles of the land. When the man had beheld these sights... from there he quickly moves his army to Nola, a colony of Chalcis.

Upon his failure to take Puteoli, Hannibal turns to the surrounding countryside and gains insignificant victories (12.159–60). Again, Silius uses the salient terms *miratur... pelagi... labores* (12.157), while visual activity is implied in *uidet* (12.156) and *perspecta* (12.158). However, these constituents are again organized to assimilate the reversal of Hannibal's fortunes to a receding tide. The original combination *pelagi labores* (3.58) has now changed into the more prohibitive *pelagi minas* (12.157). The combination also recalls the *pelagus* at Puteoli, which helps the city walls in obstructing Hannibal's army (*pelagus... officit*, 12.108–9). Additionally, the expression *quae postquam perspecta uiro* (12.158) clearly nods to *quae propere spectata duci* (3.61), with the significant replacement of the generic *uir* for the previous *dux*.⁷⁷ Finally, the keyword *labor* is again detached from Hannibal, describing instead the volcanic phenomena of the area and their infernal associations (*terraeque labores*, 12.157). The multiple connections of the Phlegraean topography to Herculean labors also return to the Herakleion at Gades and Hannibal's misreading of that ekphrasis.⁷⁸ Silius alludes to this cumulative imagery, inviting the audience to parallel Hannibal's decline of fortunes to an outgoing tide.

The tide of war turns decisively against Hannibal with the battle of Nola, which is defended by M. Claudius Marcellus. Silius emphasizes

⁷⁷ Cf. *ductorem... Libyae* (11.435) and my discussion above.

⁷⁸ For the Herculean subtext of the Phlegraean topography, see Muecke (2007) 80–82.

the importance of this event as the first real victory for the Romans and uses tidal associations again to drive home his point.⁷⁹ Nola is introduced in the narrative as *Chalcidica* (12.161), which recalls the tidal straits of Euripus and the Euboean Teuthras earlier (11.288). The Roman counter-attack against the besieging Carthaginians is also depicted in a meaningful simile that harkens to other tidal passages in the *Punica*:

fertur acerba lues disiectis incita portis
effusaeque ruunt inopino flumine turmae,
improbis ut fractis exundat molibus amnis,
propulsum ut Borea scopulis impingitur aequor,
ut rupto terras inuadunt carcere uenti.
nec torrente Libys uiso armorumque uirumque
deiectus spe stare ualet. (Pun. 12.184–90)

The gates are thrown down, a fierce destruction rushes forth, and the rushing squadrons pour out in a sudden flood. So a swollen river overflows when its dykes are broken, and so the sea is dashed upon the rocks propelled by the North wind, and so the winds, when they break prison, invade the earth. And the Libyan, having seen the torrent of arms and men, loses hope and is unable to stand.

The double assimilation of the army as both river and sea underscores Silius' focal comparandum, the encroachment of water on land. This spatial transgression is the defining conceptual and visual element of the Atlantic tides, which the language of this passage suggests. The portrayal of the Roman forces as *effusae* (12.185) in the proximity of the *propulsum...aequor* (12.187) adds to the previous tidal images. The vision of the winds invading the land (*terras inuadunt...uenti*, 12.188) harkens back to the Atlantic tides (*inuectum terris...mare*, 3.47). More importantly, this aquatic simile is framed in the narrative through Hannibal's gaze, much like the paradigmatic spectacle at Gades. Silius' use of *torrens* (*torrente...uiso*, 12.189) to describe the human flood that Hannibal sees, recalls the *torrentibus...undis* of Oceanus in Gades (3.52). But while there Hannibal does not see the limitations of his own tide, here he sees all too clearly the tide of war turn against him. His grim spectatorship of the torrential Roman onrush ends on another visual

⁷⁹ Livy (23.16.15–16) claims that the human losses in Nola were exaggerated by authors because of the novelty of a Roman victory over Hannibal. Spaltenstein (1990) 161 stresses the significance of Marcellus' defense of Nola as the first victory of the Romans.

note: the Romans happily watch Hannibal's back in retreat (*terga/contenti uidisse ducis*, 12.277–78), a vision reversal which starts with Teuthras' objectifying gaze at Capua (*ductorem uidit Libyae*, 11.435). The routing of Hannibal's army by Marcellus' soldiers can be seen as the reversal of Hannibal's rise at Gades, a failure enforced by fate, the gods, history, and nature itself.

The tidal motifs continue in the narrative of Marcellus' campaign in Sicily, which is introduced with an extensive description of its local topography, and focuses, unsurprisingly, on its tides (*Pun.* 14.11–19). Marcellus' army is described in tidal language later in the narrative, in the context of his attack at Leontini. There, after a spirited exhortation by Marcellus, the army breaks through the gates and proceeds to attack. At this narrative moment, Silius offers another meaningful simile:

Euboici non per scopulos illisa Caphareo
 Euripi magis unda furit, pontumue sonantem
 eicit angusto uiolentius ore Propontis,
 nec feruet maiore fretum rapiturque tumultu,
 quod ferit Herculeas extremo sole columnas. (*Pun.* 14.143–47)

The waves of the Euboean Euripus do not rage more when they dash through its rocky channel upon Caphereus, nor the Propontis more violently when it drives out the sounding surge from its narrow mouth; nor does the strait that lashes the pillars of Hercules near the setting sun boils and rushes on with greater uproar.

Marcellus' army is assimilated to three famous straits, where the existence of channels propels the tidal motion: Euripus, Marmara, and Gibraltar.⁸⁰ This last setting is particularly relevant to the previous narrative, because it returns to the idea of the Atlantic tides as an instrument of cosmic and historic teleology. At Gades, Hannibal wishfully assimilates himself and his army with the surging wave. He thus fails to see the equal potential of his enemy for identification with the high tide and to prognosticate the Punic future from the past. The reminiscence of Gades here signifies the rise of Roman fortunes, the converse ebb of Hannibal's campaign, and Capua as a turning point between the two ends of the tidal cycle. Even though Hannibal is absent from this book, the allusion to the tidal simile in the context of Nola discussed above (12.184–90) suggests his shocked reaction at the decline of his fortunes.

⁸⁰ Marcellus' march at Zancle is similarly likened to ocean waves (14.121–24).

Hannibal's last tidal vision comes to him in a prophetic dream (17.161–69) which foretells his recall to Carthage and his separation from Italy in the throes of Neptune's storm (17.236–91).⁸¹ Silius here engages with the historiographical tradition, in which Hannibal's prophetic dream precedes his crossing of the Alps.⁸² Silius does include that initial dream (3.163–213) but also develops a counterpart in the last book of his epic. The idea of this second dream is seminally present in Livy, who hints at Hannibal's premonition about his recall but without reference to a dream (30.20.5). Hannibal's dreamy vision here is well integrated in the tidal themes of the epic because it recapitulates its salient elements but with a crucial reversal. Hannibal's tide is now outgoing instead of incoming, compelled to move from the land into the sea:

namque grauis curis carpit dum nocte quietem,
cernere Flaminium Gracchumque et cernere Paulum
uisus erat simul aduersos mucronibus in se
destrictis ruere atque Italia depellere terra,
omnisque a Cannis Thrasymennique omnis ab undis
in pontum impellens umbrarum exercitus ibat.
ipse fugam cupiens notas euadere ad Alpes
quaerebat terraeque ulnis amplexus utrisque
haerebat Latiae, donec uis saeua profundo
truderet et rapidis daret asportare procellis.

His aegrum uisus adeunt mandata ferentes
legati...

(*Pun.* 17.160–71)

For while he rests at night, burdened with anxiety, he had a dream that he saw Flaminius and Gracchus and Paulus attacking him at once with drawn swords and driving him off the Italian soil. And the whole army of ghosts from Cannae and the waves of Trasimene were marching against him, forcing him to the sea. Eager to escape, he was trying to flee by his familiar path across the Alps and clutched the Latin land with both arms; until a harsh force drove him at last to the sea and gave him to the stormy winds to carry off. The envoys approach him, still troubled by his vision, bearing their message...

The narrative components of the Atlantic ekphrasis are present in this context, but only to mark further the complete shift in Hannibal's fate.

⁸¹ On the Virgilian echoes of the storm in *Pun.* 17, see Villalba Álvarez (2004).

⁸² For this dream in Polybius, Cicero, Livy, Valerius Maximus, and Cassius Dio, see D'Arco (2002) 145–62. For a list of dreams in the *Punica*, see Walde (2001) 310–11 with notes and bibliography.

Just as his vision at Gades is framed by the visual markers *mira...cernit* (3.46) and *propere spectata* (3.61), his dream is circumscribed by similar lexical borders on both sides: *cernere...cernere...uisus erat* (17.161–62) and *his...uisis* (17.170). In his dream, Hannibal's wishful identification with the rising tide reaches its fateful conclusion. Whereas the sea movement in Gades was inland from the sea (*mole profundum/inuictum terris*, 3.46–47), Hannibal's movement is seawards from the land (*depellere terra*, 17.163; *profundo/truderet*, 17.168–69). At Gades, the sea is rushing into the land (*terris...imponere pontum*, 3.54) while, in the dream, the ghost army rushes Hannibal into the sea (*impellens in pontum*, 17.165). Similarly, while the Ocean waves at Gades rush inland (*ingruit undis*, 3.52), in Hannibal's dream the Roman army emerges from the waves of Cannae and Trasimene (*ab undis*, 17.164) to drive Hannibal to the sea. Finally, Hannibal is propelled to the sea by a violent force (*uis saeva*, 17.168), a nameless coercion reminiscent of the eternal forces governing the tides (*saevus...tridenti*, 3.52; *qua ui*, Virg. *G.* 2.479). This reverse symmetry between Hannibal's first and last tidal visions constitutes a ring composition and encapsulates his fortunes in the *Punica*. The dream brings together the tidal strands that symbolize Hannibal's mistaken personal choices and predestined failure throughout the epic.

Our last glimpse of the Atlantic tides combines the elements of *phantasia*, geographical, and artistic ekphrasis. A brief mention of Gades as featured on the *effigies* of Scipio's triumphal procession cannot but recall the Atlantic tides and Hannibal's deceitful vision there. The reference to Hercules in this context (*laudibus...Herculeis*, 17.637–38) also evokes Hannibal's pilgrimage to the temple and the tides.⁸³ Hannibal's gaze on Gades has been substituted with that of the audience, who focalizes through the Roman spectators. Whether or not this sight invites compassion for Hannibal, it certainly prompts reflection on his failure as a result of the inexorable age-old synergy between free will and divine necessity. Isolated from Gades and its deceitfully propitious beginning, Hannibal is portrayed in Scipio's triumph in a separate effigy, at the moment of his defeat (*uisa Hannibalis campis fugientis imago*, 17.644). By severing him from Gades and objectifying him through our gaze, Silius draws the consequences that have been set in motion by Hannibal's original misunderstanding of the Atlantic tides. His

⁸³ On Hercules and Bacchus at the end of the poem with regard to Roman imperialist vision, see Marks (2005a) 224–25 and *passim*.

failure is at once deeply personal and profoundly teleological, manifesting as his inability to see his limited place in the grand narrative of Roman fate. Hannibal identifies with the tide without realizing that he too is subject to its laws: once he has peaked, he must recede. It is not accidental that Gades, the end of the world, is one of the first and last images of the poem. Given its metaliterary significance in Silius' paradigmatic tidal ekphrasis, it closes the epic in a ring composition not at all different from the tidal cycle itself. The symbolism comes full circle, from the ignorant Hannibal to the knowledgeable reader, who has been able to see the tides clearly throughout the epic.⁸⁴

5. *Amphidromic point*

In marine science, the amphidromic point is defined as a location far from the coast, where the vertical movement of the water is zero.⁸⁵ As a point of convergence of tidal lines, perhaps it signals appropriately the conclusions of my discussion: far from being décor of travelography or learned digressions, tides in the *Punica* play a significant role as thematic links between different episodes throughout the epic. Silius uses the rich historical, philosophical, and naturalistic symbolism of tides to establish a powerful and knowledgeable voice for himself, and then to explain Hannibal's personality and his fortunes in the *Punica* with insight and authority. His vivid exploitation of literary, scientific, and historical tides depicts these images as both natural elements and as manifestations of powers that lie forever beyond human control.

⁸⁴ As Cowan observes in this volume: "The general becomes not only a reader but a lover in his desire to comprehend and possess the object of his gaze... However, just as erotic desire is, almost by definition, impossible to fulfill, and Hannibal's conquest of Rome is endlessly deferred and ultimately frustrated, so his attempt as a reader to understand Rome is reduced to the level of a counterfactual [in book 12] by Fulvius' sudden return from Capua" (351).

⁸⁵ Baretta-Bekker (1998) 76.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

VIRTUAL EPIC: COUNTERFACTUALS, SIDESHADOWING, AND THE POETICS OF CONTINGENCY IN THE *PUNICA*

Robert Cowan*

On the eve of the battle of Zama, Silius reports a widespread belief about the opposing generals, Hannibal and Scipio:

quin etiam, fauor ut subigit plerosque metusue,
Scipio si Libycis esset generatus in oris,
sceptrā ad Agenoreos credunt uentura nepotes,
Hannibal Ausonia genitus si sede fuisset,
haud dubitant terras Italia in dicione futuras. (*Pun.* 17.401–5)

And furthermore, as partisanship or fear influenced the majority, they thought that, if Scipio had been born in Libyan lands, dominion would have come to the descendants of Agenor, but they do not doubt that, if Hannibal had been begotten in the Ausonian homeland, the earth would have been in Italian power.¹

At this climactic moment of his epic and of the war it depicts, Silius puts forward a counterfactual speculation, as the Roman and Carthaginian armies speculate on what might have been, “what if” Scipio had been a Carthaginian and Hannibal a Roman. The suggestion that the entire course of history could have taken a different path if certain contingencies had turned out differently stands in stark opposition to the determinist, teleological tendency of the epic genre. Counterfactuals in the *Punica*—and elsewhere in classical epic as well as other genres ancient and modern—produce a variety of effects which this chapter will explore: they emphasize and simultaneously problematize the importance of great individuals, blur the distinction between apparently divergent scenarios, and above all produce a poetics of contingency held in tension with the teleological tendencies of all narrative, and especially of epic. However, I shall argue

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¹ Translations are my own.

that the *Punica*'s self-fashioning as an epic of turning-points makes counterfactuals particularly and perhaps uniquely fundamental to its poetics of contingency.

1. *Counterfactuals, teleology, and sideshadowing*

Counterfactual history is popular but controversial.² It can serve as a salutary corrective to teleological views of history and the assumption, stated or unstated, that what we retrospectively *know* to have happened *had* to happen. Of course, in their selection of the factors and turning-points which they believe shaped actual events and which could therefore have taken them down alternative paths, counterfactual historians still have to use their own privileged models of the forces of historical change. Moreover, the very premise that history could have taken many different courses tends to favor models based on contingency, the power of "great men" to effect change, and the results of military engagements, over those stressing the importance of larger, suprapersonal economic, social, and political forces. As well as numerous modern speculations about what might have happened if Franz Ferdinand had survived Princip's assassination attempt or Fidel Castro had been successful as a New York Giants pitcher,³ counterfactuals have been used to explore not only the historical processes of the ancient world,⁴ but also its historiographers. The most elaborate exercise in counterfactual history by a classical historiographer is Livy's speculation about what would have happened if Alexander had fought against the Romans,⁵ but less developed or less explicit engagement with what might have been has been detected in virtually all ancient historiographers.⁶

It is not only in history that counterfactuals have been exploited. Novels and films predicated on counterfactual premises are popular,

² There have been numerous exercises in counterfactual (esp. military) history, but for an assessment of the theoretical implications, see Ferguson (1997) 1–90, Demandt (2001).

³ Stone (2005), Merriman (1984).

⁴ Especially Toynbee (1969), Morley (2000), and the articles in Brodersen (2000). There are also ancient examples in Cowley (2000).

⁵ Liv. 9.17–19, with Morello (2002), including further bibliography at 63 n.7.

⁶ Herodotus: Hornblower (2004) 301–6. Thucydides: Hornblower (1994) 158–59, Rood (1998) 278–80. Tacitus: Riedl (2002) 157–70, O'Gorman (2006). Roman historiography as a whole: Suerbaum (1997).

especially, but far from exclusively, in science fiction, where it is generally termed “alternate history.”⁷ Memorable recent examples in more mainstream fiction include Robert Harris’ *Fatherland*, imagining a world in which Germany won the Second World War, and Michael Chabon’s *The Yiddish Policemen’s Union*, a Chanderlesque thriller set in Sitka, a temporary Jewish homeland in Alaska, at the end of a very different twentieth century. Such thoroughgoing explorations of counterfactual scenarios are rare in ancient literature.⁸ The variant on the Helen myth in Stesichorus and Euripides, whereby her *eidolon* went to Troy while she herself sojourned in Egypt, is an interesting parallel case, but it explores a counterfactual scenario in which the *results* (the Trojan War) are the same, and it is the *causes* (Helen’s apparent adultery) which both audience and characters retrospectively realize to have taken an alternative course.⁹ Perhaps the genre which comes closest to the fully-developed “alternate histories” of modern fiction is declamation. In *controuersiae* and especially *suasoriae*, the declaimer is challenged to imagine and articulate a hypothetical situation in a counterfactual world, whether it be one in which a war-hero without hands orders his son to kill his adulterous wife, or in which the 300 deliberate about fleeing from Thermopylae.¹⁰ This is not to overstress the impact of declamation upon Imperial poetry, as has often been done, but to show that the mindset of thinking in terms of alternative universes was part of the intellectual training of the first-century AD Roman élite.¹¹

Far more common is the signaling of a counterfactual scenario which *could* or even *would* have happened, if something or someone else had not intervened to return (or divert) events to their ‘actual’

⁷ Hellekson (2001), Chapman and Yoke (2003), Duncan (2003).

⁸ Aristotle’s assertion (*Poet.* 1451b5) that the difference between the historian and the poet is that τὸν μὲν τὰ γενόμενα λέγειν, τὸν δὲ οἷα ἂν γένοιτο (“the one says what has happened, the other the things which could happen”) is often cited in connection with counterfactuals but is more concerned with the universalizing power of poetry than its assertion of contingency.

⁹ See Wright (2005) especially 58–60, 150–52. Several Attic tragedies offer the potential for events to follow a non-traditional path, only to be wrenched back on course by a *deus ex machina*, as when Euripides’ eponymous Orestes is about to kill Hermione or Sophocles’ Philoctetes remain on Lemnos.

¹⁰ Sen. *Contr.* 1.4, *Suas.* 2. Declamations as an alternative form of “myth:” Beard (1993). Counterfactual qualities: Gunderson (2003) 104–10; O’Gorman (2006) 293–97.

¹¹ Cf. Heslin (2005) 158–60 on “Achilles in the subjunctive mood,” as Statius’ *Achilleid* plays with the counterfactual scenario of his being Jupiter’s son rather than Peleus’.

or traditional course. For example, Ovid's *Heroides* offer, as a function of their epistolarity, the potential for alternative, counterfactual (or countertraditional) paths to be taken by their correspondents and addressees, as they focalize through a character at a frozen moment in mid-story, without the benefit of hindsight. However, they also share a tension common in counterfactuals, whereby the ostensible freedom of choice is balanced, if not contradicted, by prolepses which make it clear (to the extradiegetic reader at least) that the characters' future is fixed by the overlapping (perhaps identical) forces of fate and mythico-literary tradition.¹² This tension is present in spite of the ostensibly limitless possibilities offered by the embedded perspective inscribed in the epistolary form, but the contingency and unpredictability implied by counterfactuals are even more problematic in narrative genres.

Narrative tends to impose an order and inevitability upon the events which it describes.¹³ Its universalizing, totalizing tendency suggests that those events, by virtue of their very narration, not only did take place but had to take place, not by chance, but by necessity.¹⁴ This tendency is perhaps most strongly felt in epic, which is generically disposed towards a linear, teleological narrative embodying a linear, teleological conception of history.¹⁵ Narrative and historical teleology reinforce each other as they simultaneously move towards an inevitable, predetermined end. Such a conception is frequently reinforced by the technique of foreshadowing, which suggests that, whatever the possible alternatives might be at any particular juncture, the actual course of events is already known to the omniscient narrator and is hence in some way fixed.¹⁶ In epic, prophecy is an even stronger form

¹² Kennedy (1984); Barchiesi (1987) and (1993).

¹³ See Barthes (1977) 94: "Everything suggests, indeed, that the mainspring of narrative is precisely the confusion of consecution and consequence, what comes *after* being read in narrative as what is *caused by*; in which case narrative would be a systematic application of the logical fallacy...*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*—a good motto for Destiny, of which narrative all things considered is no more than the 'language.'" Cf. White (1987) 1–57.

¹⁴ Cf. Monk (1993) 12: "Conrad challenges the usual understanding of causality in narrative...by beginning *Chance* as though it were a naturalist novel tracking the grim fate of its protagonist in a deterministic universe, and then by allowing a new kind of chance to intervene, providing an alternative to the seemingly inexorable cause-and-effect progression of naturalism's narrative practices."

¹⁵ Quint (1993) 1–46; Hardie (1993a) 1–19; Kennedy (1997); Armstrong (2002) 328 and 336–40.

¹⁶ Cf. Todorov (1977) 65 (on the *Odyssey*'s "plot of predestination") and Genette (1980) 67–78.

of foreshadowing, which suggests that the future course of events is fixed because it is known and knowable, not only by the omniscient narrator in retrospect, but by characters in the narrated present.¹⁷

It is as a reaction to this determinist mode of narrative that Morson and Bernstein formulated the notion of “sideshadowing,” in which, as the former puts it, “two or more alternative presents, the actual and the possible, are made simultaneously visible.”¹⁸ Bernstein is more explicit about the alignment of foreshadowing with narrative and historical notions of determinism, as against sideshadowing’s with contingency and freedom:

In narrative terms, sideshadowing is best understood in opposition to the familiar technique of foreshadowing, a technique whose enactment can vary tremendously in its degree of intricacy, but whose logic must always value the present, not for itself, but as the harbinger of an already determined future. . . . Sideshadowing’s attention to the unfulfilled or unrealized possibilities of the past is a way of disrupting the affirmations of a triumphalist, unidirectional view of history in which whatever has perished is condemned because it has been found wanting by some irresistible historico-logical dynamic.¹⁹

Sideshadowing thus struggles against the tendency of narrative to construct a determinist, teleological world-view. In its place is a sense of contingency both in narratives and in the worlds they construct, the possibility that anything could and perhaps will happen.

Yet this effect of sideshadowing to create a poetics of contingency remains in tension with a—perhaps paradoxical—tendency to reinforce a teleological view of narrative. One might compare Knox’s famous analysis of Euripides’ *Hippolytus*, which shows how the many occasions in the tragedy when disaster might easily have been averted but was not emphasize not the contingency of that disaster but the inexorable power of Aphrodite’s revenge, which achieves its goal against all apparent odds.²⁰ In a comparable way, the signaling of counterfactual

¹⁷ This effect is partly undermined when prophecy is shown to be unreliable; see O’Hara (1990) and Morrison (1992a).

¹⁸ Morson (1994) 118. Sideshadowing in some classical texts has been nicely discussed by Newlands (2002b) 242; Pagán (2004) 117 and (2006) 197–99.

¹⁹ Bernstein (1994) 1–3. Cf. Morson (1994) *passim* but especially 117–72, Galperin (2006), Miller (2007).

²⁰ Knox (1952), summed up at 5: “the play makes an ironic juxtaposition of the maximum dramatic complication of individual choice with a predetermined and announced result.” Of course, Knox’s emphasis is on the contrast between determinism and the

scenarios, the possibilities of what might have been, while it can suggest contingency, can also reinforce a sense of teleology and predestination, since only something endorsed and guaranteed by the will of the gods, or fate, or providence could actually occur against all odds and in rivalry with so many alternative outcomes.

2. *Other men's wounds, other poets' sideshadowing*

This tension between the acknowledgement that alternative courses of events exist and the normative tendency to return to the expected, fated, traditional outcomes is played out in the counterfactual scenarios sideshadowed in Homeric and other epic.²¹ The dominance of the latter tendency is particularly underlined by the frequency of divine intervention to restore the 'natural' or traditional order. One recurrent type is the near-death of a major character with a significant role still to play in the narrative. The most famous example of this is the intervention of Aphrodite to rescue Paris from being killed in the duel with Menelaus (*Il.* 3.373–75). The scenario in which Paris dies, Helen is returned, and the war ends both prematurely and without the sack of Troy is daringly presented by the poet,²² but a divine force intervenes to return the narrative (and the events it describes) to their traditional (and fated) course. Apollonius' sideshadowings tend to function in a similar manner, though with a substantial role for privileged heroes such as Heracles and Orpheus as well as gods to maintain the divinely-ordained order and the epic teleology of the Argonauts' voyage there and back again.²³

Closely related to this is the so-called *alienum uulnus* motif, whereby a weapon misses its intended target and hits a minor warrior, often

illusion of free will rather than of alternative possibilities more generally, but the analogy remains.

²¹ Nesselrath (1992) is a splendid survey of epic counterfactuals from Homer to the Renaissance. Homer: De Jong (1987) 68–81; Lang (1989); Nesselrath (1992) 5–38; Morrison (1992a), (1992b); Loudon (1993); Kelly (2007a) 58–60.

²² Postlethwaite (1985) 2.

²³ Divine order: 2.284–87 (the Boreades would have killed Harpies, if Iris had not intervened); epic teleology: 1.861–64 (the Argonauts would have stayed on Lemnos, if Heracles had not intervened), 2.864–68 (they, in grief at Idmon's and Tiphys' deaths, would have stayed among the Mariandyni, if Hera had not inspired Ancaeus), 4.20–23 (Medea would have poisoned herself, if Hera had not put in her mind to flee), 4.903–9 (the Argonauts would have landed on Sirens' shore, if Orpheus had not intervened). See also Nesselrath (1992) 44–48.

a charioteer.²⁴ Although no counterfactual scenario is explicitly mentioned, the unambiguous implication of such scenes is that a character “would have” died “had not” the weapon aimed at them missed, been intercepted, or deflected by a god. The literal ‘near-miss’ reifies and symbolizes the metaphorical. Again, the surviving character is often one with a major part to play in the narrative, one endangered by the counterfactual scenario of their untimely death. That danger is often averted by a divinity who serves to protect and preserve the workings of fate and the Διὸς βουλή. A particularly striking example of this occurs in *Iliad* 8, when three attempts to kill Hector fail, first when Diomedes’ spear hits his charioteer Eniopeus, then when Teucer’s arrows hit first Gorgythion and then Hector’s new charioteer, Archeptolemus. No further explanation is given for the first two—the attacker simply missed (ἀφάμαρθ’, *Il.* 8.302)—but they are retrospectively reinterpreted in the light of the third, when Apollo’s intervention is revealed (παρέσφηλεν γὰρ Ἀπόλλων, *Il.* 8.311).²⁵ The unexpressed but clear counterfactual implication—that Hector “would have” died “had not” Apollo intervened—simultaneously establishes the possibility of this alternative course of events and asserts the divinely authorized nature of the traditional outcome.

This type of scene is emulated in Roman epic.²⁶ When Numitor tries to avenge his brother’s death by killing Aeneas, his spear grazes Achates’ thigh because “it was not permitted (*non... est licitum*) for him to run him through also in turn” (*Aen.* 10.342–44). The sense of substitution, already present in the Iliadic examples where the charioteer acts as a surrogate for the hero, is multiplied here.²⁷ Numitor tries to compensate for the death of his brother and *alter ego* with that of Aeneas, but the latter’s death is doubly displaced, as the spear hits Aeneas’ own *alter ego*, Achates, and even then only grazes him, an *alienum vulnus* and *Beinahetod* rolled into one. However, it is the authorial comment that “it was not permitted” for Aeneas to die which suggests that, despite the apparent possibility of the counterfactual scenario,

²⁴ Iliadic *alienum vulnus*: Fenik (1968) 126–8; Tsagarakis (1982) 111–13; Bannert (1988) 29–40; Lossau (1991); Kelly (2007a) 155–57.

²⁵ Kelly (2007a) 58. The element of double determination is even clearer at *Il.* 14.458–64, where the spear of Ajax misses Poulydamas because he springs out of the way and hits Archelochus because the gods had planned his destruction.

²⁶ Virgilian counterfactuals: Nesselrath (1992) 74–84 and Suerbaum (1998). Virgilian *alienum vulnus*: Raabe (1974) 132–36; Bonfanti (1985) 56–59; Mazzocchi (2000) 58–59.

²⁷ Epic substitution: Hardie (1993a) 19–56.

the interplay of narrative, tradition, divine will, and destiny refuses to allow any such diversion from the teleologically determined goal of the epic.²⁸ This motif is self-consciously developed by Valerius Flaccus and Statius. In *Argonautica* 6, during the battle between Aeetes and his brother Perses, which Juno has staged to make Medea fall in love with Jason, her arbitrary control over events is self-consciously emphasized when she deflects a stone thrown by Colaxes away from Jason—who, in both the literary tradition and her own personal plans, must live on—onto “the unknown and unwept head of Monesus” (V. Fl. 6.651), a sly nod to the Homeric and Virgilian minor warriors who suffer *aliena uulnera*, except that Monesus is *so* minor and so clearly exists solely to die instead of Jason, that he, *ignotum... infletumque*, is not even granted the usual poignant epitaph for such spear-fodder; neither his native fields nor his old father nor his young wife are mentioned, but in a curt, dismissive *hemiepes, praeceps ille ruit*.²⁹

Although the death is not displaced onto anyone else, Statius exploits the potential of *alienum uulnus* when describing Polynices’ near-death experience at Opheltes’ funeral games.³⁰ He is thrown from his chariot, and Statius reifies the narrative near-miss by combining it with a literal one, whereby the next three chariots only just avoid hitting him. The narrator is also explicit about the alternative path which the narrative would have taken if Polynices had actually died, the counterfactual scenario implicit in all *alienum uulnus* episodes:

quis mortis, Thebane, locus, nisi dura negasset
Tisiphone, quantum poteras dimittere bellum!
te Thebe fraterque palam, te plangeret Argos,
te Nemea, tibi Lerna comas Larisaque supplex
poneret, Archemori maior colerere sepulcro. (Theb. 6.513–17)

What an occasion this would have been for your death, Theban, had not hard Tisiphone forbidden it, how great a war you could have left

²⁸ Cf. *Aen.* 10.776–82, where Mezentius aims at Aeneas but hits Antores, the ‘instead-of hero,’ companion of Hercules, Italian colonist and doublet of Aeneas, though there is no explicit authorial comment about fate or divine intervention. Cf. Bonfanti (1985) 56–58.

²⁹ Fuccecchi (1997) 214 sees this as an example of the ἄκλαντος, comparing *Il.* 22.386, *Aen.* 11.372, and *Theb.* 11.284, but these are expressions of threat by Achilles, fear by Drances, and a rhetorical generalization by Creon, rather than instances where a warrior actually dies and is unwept, like Monesus.

³⁰ McGuire (1997) 116–17; Nagel (1999) 390; Bernstein (2004) 80; on Statius’ games, see Lovatt in this volume (155–76).

unwaged! Thebes and your brother—publicly at least—would have mourned you, Argos mourned you, Nemea too, Lerna and Larisa would have dedicated their tresses as suppliants to you, and you would have received hero-cult greater than the tomb of Archemorus.

As with the earlier examples, divine intervention is credited with preserving the life of the hero and preventing the narrative from moving down a countertraditional path.³¹ However, in the perverted universe of the *Thebaid*, it is not an Olympian who maintains the Διὸς βουλή, but a Fury who ensures that the impious curse of Oedipus is fulfilled; the epic *telos* towards which the narrative resumes its course is the fratricide, on whose very description the poet will try to renege. In Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove*, the heroic bomber-crew overcome all odds to complete their mission, in accordance with the conventional generic will of the audience, except that in the perverted world of the film, success means nuclear holocaust and the rational part of the audience's minds wants them to fail. So in the *Thebaid*, despite all attempts at delay and diversion, the presiding god *dura Tisiphone* (an epic as well as hard divinity)³² ensures that the perverted epic *telos* of fratricide is achieved, in accordance with the readers' narrative desire, but in opposition to their moral sense.

This inversion of the motif is almost an act of combinatorial imitation,³³ linking two authorial comments from Lucan's Dyrrachium narrative: within fifty lines the narrator condemns Scaeva, the hero who might have died but did not, and whose heroic *aristeia* in an unheroic world has done nothing but prepare a tyrant for Rome (Luc. 6.257–72); at the same time, the poet laments Pompey's failure ruthlessly to prosecute his advantage Sulla-like, a misplaced act of *pietas* in an *impius* world, which misses the opportunity to end the civil war and with it Rome's misfortunes:

felix ac libera regum,
Roma, fores iurisque tui, uicisset in illo
si tibi Sulla loco. dolet, heu, semperque dolebit
quod scelerum, Caesar, prodest tibi summa tuorum,
cum genero pugnassee pio. pro tristia fata!

³¹ Cf. *Theb.* 1.428–34 where Polynices might have been killed by Tydeus—a better death—but for Adrastus' intervention.

³² *durus* and *mollis* as generic markers: Hinds (1987) 21–4 and Kennedy (1993) 31–34.

³³ On this technique: Hardie (1989).

non Vticae Libye clades, Hispania Mundae
 fletset et infando pollutus sanguine Nilus
 nobilius Phario gestasset rege cadauer,
 nec Iuba Marmaricas nudus pressisset harenas
 Poenorumque umbras placasset sanguine fuso
 Scipio, nec sancto caruisset uita Catone.
 ultimus esse dies potuit tibi Roma malorum,
 exire e mediis potuit Pharsalia fatis. (Luc. 6.301–13)

Happy and free from kings you would have been, Rome, and in your own power, if you had had a Sulla to conquer for you on that occasion. It is painful, alas, and will always be painful that the greatest of your crimes benefits you, Caesar, to have fought with a dutiful son-in-law. What grim destinies! Libya would not have wept for Utica's disaster, nor Hispania for Munda's, nor would the Nile, polluted with unspeakable blood, have borne a corpse nobler than an Egyptian king, nor would Juba unburied have burdened the sands of Marmarica, nor Scipio have placated the shades of the Carthaginians with the shedding of his blood, nor would life have been denied the sacred Cato. That could have been the last day of misfortunes for you, Rome, Pharsalia could have escaped from being the central point of fate.

The narrator's depiction of Pompey is undeniably ambivalent, oscillating between naive hero-worship and realization of his selfish, tyrannical tendencies, but Tesoriero's subtle analysis of this passage goes a little too far in suggesting that an act of Sullan ruthlessness here "would have been the right thing to do."³⁴ Rather Lucan expresses the paradox of civil war whereby the only way to save Rome from tyranny is to act tyrannically, which is therefore no way at all—there *are* no right things to do in civil war or the *Civil War*.³⁵ The apparent counterfactual is illusory, not because divine intervention wrenches the narrative back on track—though the sense of hostile gods and Fate is ever-present in the *De bello civili*—but because there is no real alternative to the inevitable tyranny of the principate.³⁶ As Nigidius Figulus predicted, freedom-lovers must perversely pray for the horrors of civil war to continue, since peace only brings a master (Luc. 1.669–72). As in Statius, teleology is preserved, but a negative teleology with an inescapable, linear movement

³⁴ Tesoriero (2004) 210–12, quoting from 211. On Lucan's Pompey: Feeney (1986b); Leigh (1997) 110–57; Bartsch (1997) 73–100.

³⁵ D'Alessandro Behr (2007) 83–84 comes closer, but her emphasis on the "insoluble ethical dilemma" misses the political paradox that Pompey would have to become a tyrant in order to forestall tyranny. On the intertextuality with Virg. *Aen.* 9.757–61, see below and Thompson (1984) 211–12.

³⁶ Lucan's hostile gods: Narducci (1979) and Fantham (2003).

towards destruction. Lucan's bleak *Weltanschauung* oscillates between the contingency of a random universe ungoverned by Providence and the no-less-terrifying determinism of disaster.³⁷

In contrast, the *Punica* rejects negative and positive teleology almost entirely and exploits the *alienum uulnus* motif to generate its own poetics of contingency. Its clearest example of the motif comes in the battle before Nola.³⁸ In a context full of substitutions,³⁹ Marcellus tries to emulate Peditanus by despoiling Hannibal of his helmet:

et ardens
terrificis saeuam fundit stridoribus hastam.
nec fors an uoti uanus foret, obuia ni uis
Gestaris opposito tenuisset corpore telum.
qui dum uicinis ductorem protegit armis,
transabit non hunc sitiens grauis hasta cruorem
ingentesque minas mutata morte peregit.
auehitur raptim ductor discrimine leti
turbatus cursumque furens ad castra capessit. (Pun. 12.259–67)

And inflamed he let fly the cruel spear with fearful whistling. And perhaps he would not have had his prayer unfulfilled, had not mighty Gestar got in the way and received the weapon in his interposed body. While he protected his general with his arms right next to him, the heavy spear, thirsting for blood other than this, passed through him and fulfilled its massive threats with a substituted death. The general, thrown into confusion by the narrow margin of death, rode away rapidly and in a frenzy held his course for the camp.

Here is a classic *alienum uulnus*, with the Virgilian phrase almost paraphrased by the spear thirsting “for blood other than this” and the “substituted death,” and with the usually latent counterfactual (“Hannibal would have died had not...”) expressed. The substitution sacrifice of Gestar for Hannibal is even more marked in the aftermath

³⁷ As Feeney (1991) 282–83 observes: “If a recurrent and prominent possibility in the poem is a despairing anarchism, the poet still cannot abandon altogether the compulsion to blame the guilty gods, nor can he deprive himself of the claustrophobic sense of trapped inevitability which is provided by the language of Fate.”

³⁸ On Marcellus in the battle of Nola, see Fucecchi in this volume (232–33). The death of Bibulus (*telo non in sua uulnera misso*, “though the spear was not aimed to kill him,” Pun. 7.630) alludes even more closely to the Virgilian phrase, but his fall on a random sword protruding from a heap of corpses lacks the element of sideshadowing present in a spear missing a major hero.

³⁹ See Hardie's (1993a) 39–40 discussion of Peditanus and Cinyps (12.212–52); on Marcellus' obsession with the *spolia opima*, see Fucecchi in this volume (230–38).

of the Pedianus episode.⁴⁰ However, the deliberate self-sacrifice of Gestar—the bodyguard ‘taking a bullet for the president’—and the word *forsan* mark a shift. The absence of divine or providential intervention is reinforced, partly by the importance of a minor, human agent, but principally by the narrator’s added observation that “perhaps” Marcellus’s prayer would not have gone unfulfilled. In one sense, the addition of *forsan* could weaken the force of the sideshadowing, since it is only a *possible* alternative rather than the implied *certainty* of most counterfactuals (had not a god intervened). Yet, in another sense, it increases the feeling of contingency, uncertainty, and the equal possibility of countless alternatives: most counterfactuals are clearly marked as what *would* have happened, but, by the same token, what the gods, fate, tradition, and the narrative would never permit *actually* to happen; *forsan* equalizes the probability of actual and unrealized possibilities, all of which could “perhaps” have happened, and introduces a true poetics of contingency. This sense is reinforced by the intradiegetic reader Hannibal, who shares with us the realization that there is no divinity or narrative teleology protecting him, that he could “perhaps” have been killed by Marcellus’ spear.⁴¹ Just as the reader is thrown into confusion by the undermining of epic’s teleological decorum, so Hannibal is “thrown into confusion by the narrow margin of death” and flees the battlefield.

3. *Paths not taken: Silius’ poetics of contingency*

Sideshadowing is a feature of all classical epic, but the balance between its tendencies to problematize and to re-affirm a sense of teleology is generally weighted towards the latter. The *Punica* tends more towards a true poetics of contingency. This tendency derives from its self-conscious and explicit preoccupation with turning points and uncertainty.⁴² *quaesitumque diu, qua tandem poneret arce / terrarum Fortuna caput* (“for a long time an answer was sought to the question on what citadel Fortune

⁴⁰ Gestar acts as a surrogate for Hannibal against Hanno in the debate about declaring war in the Carthaginian senate: 2.327–74. Gestar’s speech: Cowan (2007b) 7–10.

⁴¹ I am indebted to Claire Stocks for pointing out the importance of Hannibal’s reaction.

⁴² Wilson (1993) 219–24 offers an excellent analysis of “epic” causation in the *Punica*, though his conclusion that “Silius’ epic is uncompromisingly anti-historical” is too extreme.

would finally place the headship of the world,” *Pun.* 1.7–8). The entire poem—and the war which it describes—is figured as a turning-point in Roman and world history.⁴³ It marks the point when Rome could have been destroyed or proceeded to world-domination, when its military success began to increase while its morals declined, when either Rome or Carthage—and all that those two poles represent—could have dominated the world. In poetic terms, it is the mid-point between the ktistic *Aeneid* and Lucan’s anti-foundational epic of dissolution, the *De bello ciuili*,⁴⁴ but there is also a contestation within the poem as to whether it will be named *Romana* by Carthaginian victors or *Punica* by Romans.⁴⁵ Just as the whole war constitutes a juncture from which alternative paths of history emanate, so there are many points at which the course of the war itself might have moved in a different direction, the two levels of contingency acting to reinforce each other. As such, contingency is a fundamental principle of the *Punica*’s poetics.

A partial exception to this are the sideshadowings not of an alternative path, but simply of delay. Thus the Roman capture of Capua would have happened earlier had night not fallen (13.244–55), Marcellus would have taken Syracuse at once had not plague descended (14.580–84), and Varro would have precipitated battle at Cannae, had not the alternation of command enabled Paulus to delay, though, with Silius’ characteristic antithesis of one and many, this only gave the thousands one day (9.15–20); Silius exploits wordplay to bring out the idea that it is not only the lot but chance (*sors*) which delays the battle, as Varro hurtles towards not only disaster but fate (*fata*).⁴⁶ These examples resemble the assertion of Virgil’s Vulcan that Jupiter and the Fates could have allowed Troy, though doomed to fall, to stand for another ten years (*Aen.* 8.398–99). They combine a sense of inevitability—these events are going to happen at some point—with one of elasticity, what Suerbaum calls *Dehnbares Schicksal*,⁴⁷ the notion that there is a level of unpredictability even with a teleological scheme.

Most of Silius’ counterfactuals generate a stronger sense of contingency. It is perhaps unsurprising that many occur in the related

⁴³ Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2505–11.

⁴⁴ Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2501–2; Tipping (2004) 345–51.

⁴⁵ E.g., Hamilcar’s indoctrination of Hannibal (1.80) with Cowan (2009) and also Ganiban’s (74–83), Harrison’s (280–82), and Keith’s (361–62) essays in this volume.

⁴⁶ Cf. Niemann (1975) 170–73. Minor Silian counterfactuals: Nesselrath (1992) 109–10, especially n. 190.

⁴⁷ Suerbaum (1998) 362–64.

contexts of sport and war, activities where uncertainty of outcome and the potential for that outcome to be affected by the smallest of factors are both greatest.⁴⁸ Several counterfactuals occur in the context of Patroclus', Anchises', and Opheltes' funeral games,⁴⁹ while Silius has a pair of relatively unremarkable examples in the games held by Scipio in Spain in book 16.⁵⁰ Durius would have won the chariot-race perhaps had not joy and fear got the better of him (16.431–33), and Hesperos and Theron would have shared the running prize if the former had not pulled the latter's hair (16.517–21). It is noticeable that here too divine intervention is a prominent motif in the Homeric, Virgilian, and Statian examples, but not the Silian. However, what is important about these counterfactuals is not so much their content as their existence. It is well established that epic games, from Homer to Statius, act as synecdoches for the larger epic, and especially martial, narrative in which they are inset.⁵¹ The concentration of counterfactual scenarios within them thus serves to suggest the contingency of the events of which they are microcosms.

These small-scale sideshadowings contribute to the picture of a contingent universe, into which fit more significant bifurcations of history. Perhaps the most significant of these are the several occasions when the victory of Carthage and the defeat, or even destruction, of Rome is mooted. These sideshadowings all look back to Patroclus' near-sacking of Troy:

Ἐνθά κεν ὑψίπυλον Τροίην ἔλον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
 Πατρόκλου ὑπὸ χερσὶ· περὶ γὰρ ἔγχεϊ θῦεν·
 εἰ μὴ Απόλλων Φοῖβος ἐϋδμήτου ἐπὶ πύργου
 ἔστη, τῷ ὀλοᾷ φρονέων, Τρώεσσι δ' ἀρήγων. (Il. 16.698–701)

Then indeed the sons of the Achaeans would have captured high-gated Troy under the hands of Patroclus, for he raged about with his spear

⁴⁸ Cf. Morson (1994) 173–78 on “sports time.”

⁴⁹ *Il.* 23.382–84 (Diomedes would have passed Eumelus, if Apollo had not struck the whip from him); 23.733–34 (Ajax and Odysseus would have wrestled a third bout, if Achilles had not intervened); 23.490–91 and 23.540–42 are related to disputes over prizes rather than the actual outcome of the sporting events. Virg. *Aen.* 5.232–34 (Mnestheus would have won the ship-race if Cloanthus had not prayed to the sea-gods).

⁵⁰ Silius' games: König (2005) 235–53 and Lovatt in this volume (155–76).

⁵¹ Homer: Postlethwaite (1995), Kelly (2007b) 383; Virgil: Duckworth (1967a), Hardie (1987), Feldherr (2002); Statius: Nagel (1999), Lovatt (2005).

in front of them, had not Phoebus Apollo stood on the well-built tower, with destructive intent against him, but helping the Trojans.

Even though this would have been a dramatic departure from the tradition, the reassuring, normalizing features of Homeric counterfactuals are all present. Troy, of course, will be sacked eventually, and although being stormed by Patroclus rather than taken by the stratagem of the wooden horse would constitute a change to tradition, this falls more within the category of delay than reversal. Moreover, divine intervention, in the form of Apollo, is on hand to restore both narrative normality and the fulfillment of the Διὸς βουλή. Slightly more troubling is the moment when Turnus, having broken into the Trojan camp, could have let in his comrades and destroyed the Trojans:

Diffugiunt uersi trepida formidine Troes,
et si continuo uictorem ea cura subisset,
rumpere claustra manu sociosque immittere portis,
ultimus ille dies bello gentique fuisset.
sed furor ardentem caedisque insana cupido
egit in aduersos. (Aen. 9.756–61)

Routed, the Trojans scattered in fearful panic, and if that precaution had occurred at once to him in his moment of victory, to burst the bars by force and let his allies in through the gates, that would have been the last day for the war and for the people. But frenzy and a mad desire for slaughter drove him raging against the enemy.

Even here, Turnus' failure to take this opportunity is put down to his solipsistic frenzy and blood-lust, so that, although there is no divine intervention, the Rutulian's own character and his position on the opposite side of the *furor* / *pietas* polarity from Aeneas can be seen to eliminate the Trojans' risk of extinction.⁵² The victory of *pietas* over *furor* is predetermined, and this is underlined by the way in which an act of *furor* serves to defeat its own ends.⁵³ Nevertheless, there is a very real sense here that the whole future course of world history could have been altered, rather than merely delayed, if the Trojan people were destroyed and Rome never founded. Virgil holds in perfect tension that possibility and the opposing sense that, owing to Turnus' character, it never really could have happened. Engaging with this passage in the

⁵² Cf. Goldberg (1995) 156: "Turnus secures his momentary, personal victory at the cost of a lasting, communal one." See also Schenk (1984) 201–6.

⁵³ Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3.4.65.

great counterfactual at Dyrrachium (6.301–13, discussed above [331–33]), Lucan bitterly inverts the force of *ultimus dies*, so that the final day for Trojan Rome, so narrowly avoided, becomes the narrowly-missed final day of Rome's misfortunes. But for Turnus' error (or his nature), Rome might never have existed; because of Pompey's error (or nature), Rome in its true, free, republican sense, will cease to exist.

Silius engages in combinatorial allusion of these two passages when sideshadowing the destruction of Rome, had it not been for Fabius' selection as dictator.⁵⁴

ac ni sacra seni uis impressumque fuisset
sistere Fortunam cunctando aduersa fouentem,
ultima Dardanii transisset nominis aetas. (Pun. 7.9–11)

And had not the old man had a sacred divine power and determined to bring to a standstill, by delaying, a Fortune which was nurturing misfortunes, the final age of the Dardan name would have passed.

Silius combines allusion to Virgil's near-disaster and Lucan's near-salvation with a perversion of the final generation which heralds in the Golden Age in *Eclogue* 4.⁵⁵ Silius also echoes Ennius' famous line (*Ann.* 363–65 Skutsch) about Fabius' achievement by delaying (*cunctando*), but instead of standing the state back on its feet (*restituit rem*), he brings to a standstill hostile Fortune (*sistere Fortunam*). There is no Homeric divinity here to reassert the order of things, so the feeble figure of an old man (*seni*) takes on a "sacred power" which opposes the hostile forces of Fortune. The counterfactual reinforces Fabius' depiction as a synecdochic hero, the one man who stands for the many, which has been developed in the previous eight lines.⁵⁶ As we shall explore further below, the possibility of alternative outcomes can emphasize the importance of one man in ensuring that the actual path of history was followed. Fabius' action is a positive equivalent to the world-changing decisions of Turnus and Pompey, but it is also only one of many such turning-points. Both the singularity of the synecdochic hero and the significance of the turning-point are diluted by the sheer number of

⁵⁴ Silius' Fabius: von Albrecht (1964) 68–76, Kißel (1979) 116–27, Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2523–31; Bernstein (2008) 139–45; also Fucecchi's (221–30) and Bernstein's (381–84) essays in this volume.

⁵⁵ Virg. *Ecl.* 4.3. It is notable that the author of the *Ilias Latina* uses the *ultimus dies* motif to connect the Homeric *Beinahetod* of Paris with this nexus of passages about the near-destruction of the Trojan people (*Ilias* 311).

⁵⁶ Synecdochic hero: Hardie (1993a) 3–14.

junctures at which Rome might have fallen and Carthage been victorious. The poetics of contingency are here reinforced by a poetics of indeterminacy, as bifurcations proliferate and with them the alternative realities which would develop from them. Even the search for parallels and exempla undermines the singularity of both leader and historic moment.

Fabius calms his son's anger at the rashness of Minucius with the explicitly didactic exemplum of Camillus (7.557–63).⁵⁷ His evocation of the counterfactual scenario in which, had it not been for Camillus' magnanimity, Rome would have moved to Veii and not now be standing at the peak of the earth, serves not only as an exemplum but as an amplifying parallel for his own actions. Camillus, like Fabius, is one man, the synecdochic hero, whose ability single-handedly to change the course of history is particularly emphasized by a counterfactual approach. Moreover, the counterfactual migration to Veii, so eloquently rejected by Camillus in Livy's fifth book and proposed again during the Second Punic War by Metellus,⁵⁸ conjures an alternative history in which, not Rome, but an *altera Roma*, distinct from but strangely similar to the real Rome, attains dominance.⁵⁹ The whole Capuan episode in *Punica* 11 plays with the notion of Capua as an *altera Roma* (as well as *altera Carthago*), with its own alternative Trojan genealogy in the song of Teuthras; the counterfactual scenario whereby Capua usurped Rome's position is explicitly, if despairingly, described by the leader of the secession from Rome, Virrius, on the night before his and his allies' suicide, and the capture of the city (13.264–66).⁶⁰ Virrius too uses the language of migration, which reinforces the parallel. As we shall explore further below, it is a function of the sideshadowing, the narrowness of the margin which separates the alternative realities in which Rome, Capua, Veii, or Carthage is mistress of the world, which blurs the distinction between these alternatives and enables the poem to explore their parallels.

⁵⁷ Exemplarity in Silius: Tipping (1999). For Fabius and his son, see further Bernstein in this volume (382–83).

⁵⁸ Camillus: Liv. 5.51–54. Metellus: *Pun.* 10.415–48, Liv. 22.53.4–13, V. Max. 5.6.7.

⁵⁹ *altera Roma* (outside Silius): Ceașescu (1976), Kraus (1994).

⁶⁰ Silius' Capua as *altera Roma*: Cowan (2002), (2007a); cf. Burck (1984b) and Bernstein's discussion in this volume (395–97). Teuthras' song: Bruère (1959) 233–35; von Albrecht (1964) 160; Burck (1984b) 17–19, 24–28; Schenk (1989); Cowan (2002) 52–58; and Manolaraki in this volume (312–14). Virrius: Rebischke (1913) 123–4; Kiβel (1979) 59; Burck (1984b) 43–44; Cowan (2007a) 24–27.

4. *Let us now praise famous men: Sideshadowing and the synecdochic hero*

Many historians say that the French did not win the battle of Borodino because Napoleon had a cold, and that if he had not had a cold the orders he gave before and during the battle would have been still more full of genius and Russia would have been lost and the face of the world have been changed. (Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, book 10, ch. 28)

Counterfactuals, because of their emphasis on contingency and the potential for very small events radically to alter the large-scale course of history, also emphasize the potential for the impact of a single figure to change the face of history.⁶¹ Indeed, it is one of the features of counterfactual history that it tends to privilege, not only contingency and randomness, but a “great man” view of historical causation, whereby a single decision made by a Caesar, a Napoleon, or a Hitler has greater ramifications than the large-scale social, economic, or political forces which will tend to move history in a particular direction, regardless of the minutiae of individual events. It is not therefore surprising that several of the counterfactual speculations in the *Punica* deal with what would have happened, were it not for the actions, hegemony, or even mere existence of a prominent individual. For example, Silius speculates that Marcellus “might perhaps have swum free from the cruel straits of danger which seized him,” if his son had not been killed, leading to a Mezentius-like loss of heart and a refusal to defend himself.⁶² Hannibal, the intradiegetic reader, also offers an interpretation of Marcellus’ death which sees it as entailing the fall of Rome (15.393–94; cf. Liv. 27.27.11); that he is mistaken—just as Gestar is wrong to think that Rome was dependent on Regulus—is another contribution to the poem’s deliberation as to whether Rome’s salvation was due to so great and *so many* men, or to the one, synec-

⁶¹ Tolstoy, in contrast, uses counterfactuals in *War and Peace* to emphasize the irrelevance of great men. Cf. Morello’s (2002) 74–80 demonstration that Livy’s Alexander counterfactual asserts the superiority of the collective over the *unus homo*.

⁶² *forsan et enasset rapidi freta saeua pericli, / ni telum aduersos nati uenisset in artus* (15.375–76). Note the force of *forsan*, discussed above. Spaltenstein (1990) 367, as well as Martin and Devallet (1992) 48, note that both this and the wounding of Hasdrubal are unattested in Livy and probably Silian additions. Livy has young Marcellus wounded but not killed (27.27.7), and is far more condemnatory of his father’s tactical recklessness (11). Silius’ radically different depiction from Livy (“ganz in Gegensatz dazu,” 62): Burck (1984a) 60–68. The *peripeteia* which introduces the “tragic final phase,” and on echoes of Virgil’s Daedalus and Mezentius: Burck (1984a) 65–66 and extensively Fucecchi in this volume (233–36).

dochic, proto-*princeps*, Scipio (*quantosque ad bella creavit / et quot Roma uiros*, 1.4–5).⁶³

We have just seen the importance which the narrator places upon Fabius, and how that is reinforced by the Cunctator's own exemplum of Camillus. Hannibal himself expresses similar sentiments:

obuia si primus nobis hic tela tulisset,
nullane nunc Trebiae et Thrasymenti nomina? nulli
lugerent Itali? numquam Phaethontius amnis
saeginea pontum turbasset decolor unda? (Pun. 7.147–50)

If this man had been the first to bear arms against us, would the Trebia and Thrasymentus have no reputations now? Would no Italians be mourning? Would the discolored river of Phaethon never have polluted the sea with its bloody waters?

This speculation clearly engages with the narrator's opening sideshadowing, but derives much of its complexity from two further intertexts. The old retainer Marus tells Regulus' wounded son, Serranus, that the defeats at the Trebia and Trasimene would never have happened if his father had lived on until their era (6.296–98). On one level, this is less a considered counterfactual speculation than a speech-act expressing devotion to Regulus and despair at the recent disasters. However, the sideshadowing sets up both parallels and contrasts between the watery defeats inflicted by Hannibal and, respectively, Regulus' victory over the serpent at the river Bagrada and his defeat and capture by Xanthippus.⁶⁴ Regulus is a problematic figure, whose courage and *constantia* are tainted by his recklessness, arrogance, and cruelty to his family.⁶⁵ He is a yardstick against which the heroes of the Second Punic War can be measured, and Marus' assertion—like Gestar's that the defeat of Regulus left Rome without hope—challenges the reader to compare the actual triumphs and disasters of Flaminius, Fabius, Scipio, and the others with the virtual ones of the hypothetically surviving Regulus. Marus' inset narrative is, as Fröhlich puts it, a “key” to the whole epic, but such keys still require interpretation. It is with this key that Fabius' synecdochic status must also be interpreted.

⁶³ Gestar: 2.340–44, with Cowan (2007b) 7–10.

⁶⁴ Fröhlich (2000) 221–22.

⁶⁵ Silius's Regulus: von Albrecht (1964) 62–68; Häußler (1978) 168–77; Fröhlich (2000); Augoustakis (2006).

This speculation gains further resonance from its echo of Diomedes' counterfactual speculation, reported by the ambassador Venulus to the Latin Council (*Aen.* 11.285–87), that if Troy had produced two more men like Hector and Aeneas, it would have attacked Greece, and the latter would have mourned at the reversal of fortune (*uersis lugeret Graecia fatis*).⁶⁶ Virgil produces a tension between glorifying the synecdochic hero—it is these individuals, rather than the collective Trojan people, who might have reversed the course of the war—and problematizing his singularity—there is not only a very Roman diarchy in the pairing of Aeneas and Hector, but the gemination is itself geminated, as a second pair would be required for the counterfactual to become reality. Silius alludes even more closely to these lines in Paulus' aristeia at Cannae: *alter si detur in armis / Paulus Dardaniis, amittant nomina Cannae* ("if another Paulus in arms were granted, Cannae would lose its reputation," 10.29–30); the motif of a battlefield's losing its *nomina* connects it to Hannibal's words about Fabius. Of course, Paulus the consul ought to have an "other," but his colleague Varro (though he redeems himself by not despairing of Rome, 10.626–29) does not match him as he should, and indeed, in his own moment of sideshadowing, he could have equaled Paulus' glory, had the gods not prevented him from dying at Hannibal's hand (9.424–26). This tension between the one and the two—Rome needs two consuls, but they both have to be Paulus—is even more clearly expressed in Paulus' counterfactual epitaph: *solī si bella agitanda darentur, / aequares forsā Fabio*, "if it had been granted to you alone to wage the war, perhaps you would have equaled Fabius" (10.306–7).⁶⁷ If Paulus had attained the singularity of the synecdochic hero,⁶⁸ he would have matched another synecdochic hero and thus become not a proto-imperial *unus homo* but one of the republican *tot uiri*, the succession of one men in the *Punica* who add up to a collective. Only with the rise of Scipio does the poem acquire a true synecdochic hero and with him move, for good or ill, towards the principate.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Cf. *Il.* 2.371–74.

⁶⁷ Paulus and Varro: von Albrecht (1964) 76–77; Niemann (1975) 149–247; Kiβel (1979) 123–27; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2531–36; Hardie (1993b) 67–69; Marks (2005b) 139–40; Cowan (2007b).

⁶⁸ Paulus' status as synecdochic hero is reinforced and problematized by his intertextuality with figures such as Hector and Pompey: Cowan (2007b).

⁶⁹ Scipio as model of *princeps* and especially Domitian, negatively characterized: Ahl, Davis, Pomeroy (1986) 2542–55 (cf. McGuire [1997] 78–85 and Tipping in this volume [193–218]); positively: Marks (2005a).

Silius does not exploit the connection between counterfactuals and great men in one direction only, using sideshadowing to explore the theme of the synecdochic hero. The disproportionate impact on events of one man can also amplify his poetics of contingency, especially when an episode draws particular attention to the minuteness of the difference between one course of events' taking place and another's. The flight of Hasdrubal, son of Gisgo, from Scipio in Spain is depicted as turning on the slightest chance:

nec finem daret ille dies animosaque uirtus,
 ni perlapsa uiro loricae tegmine harundo
 et parco summum uiolasset uulnere corpus
 suasissetque fugam. (Pun. 16.109–12)

Nor would that day and his spirited valor have made an end, had not an arrow, slipped through the covering of his cuirass, violated the surface of his body with a slight wound, and urged flight.

Such a glancing blow more usually marks the non-occurrence of a death, a *Beinahetod* which itself implies the counterfactual scenario where a warrior is not grazed but killed.⁷⁰ The slightness of Hasdrubal's wound is stressed by the juxtaposition of *parco* and *summum* in the "golden line" arrangement of the adjectives. The intertextual engagement with Peleus' glancing wound of the mock-epic Calydonian boar (*summum destrinxit harundo / corpus*, "the reed grazed the surface of its [the boar's] skin," Ov. *Met.* 8.382–83) further emphasizes its triviality, but also, by replacing *destrinxit*⁷¹ with *uiolasset*, produces an almost oxymoronic paradox whereby a scratch on the skin does not "graze" but "violates." This disparity between adjectives and verb is expressive of the disparity between cause and effect; in a narrative world governed by Silius' poetics of contingency, a scratch becomes a wound, which becomes flight, which becomes defeat. As with Napoleon's cold, so with Hasdrubal's graze: the disproportionate effect of the one on the many is multiplied by disproportionate effect of a trivial event upon that one, but it is also held in tension with it. The great man may affect the course of history, but not necessarily because of his will; he is as subject to contingency and chance as the many are to him. Perhaps

⁷⁰ E.g., *Il.* 3.355–60, 4.134–40 (probably the closest: ἀκρότατον δ' ἄρ' οἷστος ἐπέγραψε χροά φωτός, 4.139), 7.249–54 (Hector), 11.434–38 (with divine intervention by Athena); Virg. *Aen.* 9.576–78 (only a brief postponement), 10.331–32 (Venus intervenes), 10.342–44 (see above), 10.476–78; Stat. *Theb.* 9.107–8.

⁷¹ As Hollis (1970) 84 observes, "merely a superficial graze."

none of Silius' counterfactuals is more self-consciously expressive of this potential for the want of a nail to lose a war.

5. *All roads lead to Rome—parallel universes*

One of the most remarkable features of Silius' counterfactuals is the way in which the potential alternative outcomes are less distinct from each other than one might expect. This has something in common with a common tendency of counterfactual narratives to reinforce a sense of inevitability by showing different routes coming to the same end. However, Silius' counterfactual scenarios do not come to the *same* end—victory and world-domination for Carthage are hardly the same as Roman hegemony—but rather the divergent outcomes are shown to be strangely and even disturbingly similar. In our original example from the eve of Zama, the counterfactual scenarios by which Hannibal was born in Rome and Scipio in Carthage bring about oddly similar results, victory for Rome or for Scipio in either scenario.⁷² This serves to blur the distinction between the two cities, the two generals, and the two outcomes.⁷³ The parallelism between Hannibal and Scipio as individuals, and the contingency of the distinction between them, is brought out in the counterfactual which Juno (disguised as Thrasydemon) expresses that Hannibal would have been deified if Fortune had made him Roman (4.729–31); Hannibal is a prolepsis of the Lucanian Caesar, of all Roman *principes*, and especially of Scipio—the small margin which separates them emphasizes their close similarity.

⁷² There is an ironic example of this in Imilce's argument against the sacrifice of her and Hannibal's son, asking the rhetorical question whether the loss of the First Punic War was any more worthy of tears than the (counterfactual) sacrifice of baby Hannibal would have been (4.800–2). Her implied antithesis between Hamilcar's defeat and Hannibal's hoped-for victory collapses in the reader's retrospective knowledge of the latter's failure, all too like his father's. Hence the difference for Carthage between the alternative scenarios of defeat at the Aegates Islands, with Hannibal never reaching maturity, and defeat at Zama is negligible. On the scene, see Augoustakis (2008). I am grateful to the editor for drawing this example to my attention.

⁷³ Cf. Hardie (1993a) 25: "the two generals are virtually interchangeable," and as Ganiban shows in this volume, Hannibal's heroism is therefore underscored as tragic.

Perhaps even more troubling is the narrator's approbation of Venus in the *nekyia* for her foresight in inspiring Jupiter with adulterous lust for Scipio's mother, Pomponia:⁷⁴

quae ni prouisa fuissent,
Sidonia Iliacas nunc uirgo accenderet aras. (*Pun.* 13.619–20)

Had it not been for these providential foresights, a Sidonian maiden
would now be lighting the Ilian altars.

This assertion is disturbing enough in itself, especially since it depicts Rome's salvation as resulting from adultery (*furto*, 13.615), the second occasion on which Venus in her most decadent and immoral aspect has saved Rome, following so closely after her corruption with *luxuria* of the hardy Carthaginians at Capua. However, more closely related to the counterfactual scenario is the way in which the narrator bizarrely depicts the hypothetically victorious Carthaginians as continuing Roman religious traditions, appointing a Vestal from among their own young women, and having her tend the flame which specifically connects Rome to her Trojan ancestry. The juxtaposition of the ethnic adjectives in the near-golden line emphasize not only the reversal but the paradox. One could imagine Silius choosing an image which stressed the Otherness of Carthage and the incongruity of her hypothetical control of Rome—a temple to Tanit in the Forum or child-sacrifice in Capitoline tophets. Instead, the conquest would lead to an alternative future strangely similar to the actual one. The distinction between a Carthaginian future and a Roman one is blurred and collapsed almost to the point of disappearance.⁷⁵ The tiny turning-point of history when Jupiter either did or did not lust after Pomponia is revealed to be, not the flap of a butterfly's wings which leads to a hurricane, but tiny in effect as well as nature: it may be a Roman or a Carthaginian virgin who lights the Trojan altars, but they will still be lit and the difference between the two outcomes is less than one might expect.

This convergence of the ostensibly diverging paths of history reinforces one of the *Punica*'s other main implications, not only that two hypothetical outcomes are remarkably similar, but that—paradoxically—both take place. The image of divergent paths is perhaps most

⁷⁴ Reitz (1982) 90–92; Augoustakis (2008) 66–70; and Tipping in this volume (203–4).

⁷⁵ *Punica*'s blurring of Carthaginian and Roman: McGuire (1997) 127–35.

obviously present in Scipio's re-enactment of the Prodician Heracles' choice between Virtue and Vice at the crossroads.⁷⁶ Once more, there is no explicit counterfactual, expressed with an unreal condition, but the alternative potential futures, dependent on whether Scipio chooses Virtus or Voluptas, are clear. Scipio's eventual choice of Virtus, and the path of history to which that choice appears to commit him and the Rome of which he is increasingly the synecdochic hero, is undermined by the parting words of Voluptas, as she flounces off:

sed enim indignata Voluptas
non tenuit uoces. 'nil uos iam demoror ultra'
exclamat; 'uenient, uenient mea tempora quondam,
cum docilis nostris magno certamine Roma
seruiet imperiis et honos mihi habebitur uni.' (Pun. 15.123–27)

But Voluptas in her indignation did not hold back her words, "I shall not detain you two any longer now," she shouted. "My time will come, will come one day, when Rome, will follow my teachings and, in a great struggle, will be enslaved to my power, and honor (magistracy?) will be held by me alone."

This picture of Rome's future squares so obviously, not just with Roman moralizing discourse in general, but with the *Punica's* own ceaseless adumbration of moral decline, that no reader is in any doubt about the validity of Voluptas' vaunt. Scipio's choice of Virtus over Voluptas seems almost irrelevant, since the latter will possess Rome in the end. Yet the implication is not merely that Virtus will be succeeded and superseded by Voluptas, and that Scipio's choice has only short-term application, but also that the apparently divergent outcomes of choosing one or the other are disturbingly similar. The military valor which leads to Rome's victory over Carthage and attendant world domination has the same net effect on her national character and moral fiber as luxury and pleasure. As the narrator wishes, in the great paradox which closes the Cannae narrative, it would have been better for Rome's morals if Carthage had remained in existence.⁷⁷ The alternatives facing Scipio at the crossroads prove to be two sides of a very thin coin.

⁷⁶ Laudizi (1989) 135–38. See also Tipping in this volume (209–11).

⁷⁷ *Pun.* 10.657–58, with Fowler (1997a) 20–24; Tipping (2007) 224–31 and in this volume (197).

6. *But that's another story...: Narrative counterfactuals*

In a historical epic narrative, of course, the distinction between narrative suspense—the possibility that the story might move in any of several divergent directions—and historical contingency—the idea that the course of history might do so—becomes blurred to the point of vanishing. The former might be considered more a property of narratives composed *a nihilo*, where the narrator has complete control over what happens in her narrative; it is also relevant to mythological narratives where the narrator can draw on a range of alternatives and thus call attention to his power to choose one over the others.⁷⁸ The writer of historical epic has less freedom to manipulate the actual course of his narrative,⁷⁹ but this necessary convergence of narrative and history also enables him to subject the latter to the same forces of potential uncertainty as the former. To say that the author of a historical (epic) narrative conflates the categories of historical and narrative contingency would run the risk of banality and tautology, were it not that Silius dramatizes the conflation of the two by embedding in his epic intradiegetic readers—or “interpreting characters”—who are uncertain both how the historical course of events will turn out and how to read the narrative.⁸⁰

A key example comes at the end of *Punica* 12, when Hannibal retreats from the walls of Rome, warned off by Juno's apocalypse of the gods ranged in defense of the city. The citizens of Rome are joyful and relieved but still nervous and suspicious as they deliberate whether to sightsee the remains of Hannibal's camp (12.733–49). The choice of *Aeneadae* to describe the Romans, though not uncommon in the *Punica*, signals their literary as well as genealogical descent from the

⁷⁸ Harder (1990) 295–303. Solodow (1988) 57–60 goes a little too far in asserting that Ovid's contrary-to-fact sentences are exceptional in drawing attention to the presence of the narrator, and his acute observations on the phenomenon could also be applied to other authors. Mythological variants: O'Hara (2007) 13–15, 28–32.

⁷⁹ See Suerbaum (1998) 362: “ein historischer Epiker...erlaubt sich gegenüber der Geschichte keine fundamentalen Alternativen. Allenfalls läßt er erkennen, daß er immer wieder Alternativen sieht, wie die Geschichte auch anders hätte verlaufen können.” The problems of historical epic: Häußler (1978) 212–51, Burck (1979), Feeney (1991) 250–69, Wilson (1993), McGuire (1997) 54–55.

⁸⁰ Interpreting characters: Schor (1980), Winkler (1985), Bartsch (1989), Slater (1990), O'Hara (1993).

Trojans of *Aeneid* 2.⁸¹ For this is clearly a re-enactment of the scene in which the joyful and relieved (but fatally neither nervous nor suspicious enough) Trojans enjoy a sight-seeing tour of the Greek camp (*Aen* 2.26–39). Unlike their ancestors, the Romans think this retreat is a trick, an ambush, not only because that would be typical of Hannibal's *fides plus quam Punica*, but because they have 'read' (in the same way as Seneca's *Medea* has 'seen' Euripides' *Medea*) *Aeneid* 2 and fear that this re-enactment is precise to the point of the false retreat.

For the whole of Hannibal's assault of Rome has been a replay of the Greek assault on Troy, but neither the external reader nor the internal readers (Hannibal *and* the Romans) can be certain what sort of replay it is. Hannibal thought that he was Agamemnon sacking Troy, but Juno explains to him that this is no Troy, and that he is enacting the role of Aeneas, faced by the hostility of the gods and having no choice but to retreat. Hannibal the interpreting character has correctly identified *Aeneid* 2 as the primary intertext of *Punica* 12, but has misunderstood the assignment of the different roles. After his retreat, the Romans are faced with a similar hermeneutic quandary. Alternative paths of history bifurcate before them: Hannibal may have retreated and Rome been spared the sack it feared, *or* this may be another Carthaginian ruse which will lead to Rome's destruction as the Greeks' ploy led to that of their metropolis. Simultaneously, alternative narrative and intertextual paths bifurcate before them: is this a precise re-enactment of *Aeneid* 2 so that Hannibal, like the Greeks, will return and sack Trojan Rome, *or* (as proves to be the case) is it part of an inversion, whereby Hannibal the anti-Aeneas, warned off by his tutelary goddess, will enter into the second half of this palindromic epic, moving steadily away from the Rome he has just reached until he ends up shipwrecked off Carthage like the Aeneas of *Aeneid* 1, so that this retreat constitutes a genuine move (backwards) away from the (unfulfilled) sack of Trojan Rome? The uncertainty, for the external reader at least, persists into book 13, when the Arpine traitor Dasius enacts the intertextual role of Sinon, telling a tale of the Palladium, but one addressed to Hannibal and which leads not to the sack of the city but to the enemy's final withdrawal.

⁸¹ Cf. *Aeneadum* (1.1), with Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2495; Wilson (1993) 218–19. Literary and genealogical descent: Cowan (2006).

Although it is the Roman people who act as intradiegetic readers and interpreting characters in this episode, it is Hannibal who is the principal ‘reader’ throughout the epic.⁸² He repeatedly tries to understand, to acquire the mastery which comes with knowledge, and all too often fails in that attempt. Gibson and Fowler have respectively shown how his failure to comprehend the workings of the Atlantic tide at Gades and the limitations of his interpretation of the friezes on the temple at Liternum indicate his incompetence as a reader and corresponding inability to master the world as well as the meaning of the poem.⁸³ Yet it is particularly in the poem’s many aetiological episodes that Hannibal tries and fails to understand the nature of Rome, reading the city in the vain hope of comprehending and conquering it, learning its secret name.⁸⁴ As the internal audience of aetiological narratives about the Fabii, Cloelia, and the Palladium, he, like the external reader, strives to understand the nature of Rome by reading and interpreting these narratives. Already in his youth *nocturno penetrat Capitolia uisu* (1.64), and though the force of *uisu* is mainly passive as he experiences the dream-vision of penetrating the Capitol, it also carries a hint of the active, that he is invading the heart of Rome with his penetrating gaze. This hint is reinforced when, in book 12, he stands on a hill outside the city and contemplates it.⁸⁵

nunc aditus lustrat, clausas nunc cuspidē pulsat
 infesta portas fruiturque timore pauentum,
 nunc lentus celsis adstans in collibus intrat
 urbem oculis discitque locos causasque locorum,
 ac legeret uisu cuncta et penetraret in omnes
 spectando partes, ni magno turbine adesset
 Fuluius haud tota Capuae obsidione relictā. (12.565–71)

Now he surveys the approaches, now pounds the closed gates with his hostile spear and enjoys the fear of the terrified, now standing on a high hill he slowly enters the city with his eyes and learns the places and the origins of the places. And he would have read everything with his gaze and penetrated into every part by watching, had not Fulvius

⁸² On Hannibal’s various misunderstandings, see the essays by Ganiban (73–98) and Manolaraki (293–321) in this volume.

⁸³ Gibson (2005), Fowler (1996). Cf. Muecke (2007).

⁸⁴ Aetiological excursuses: Bruère (1958) and (1959); Asso (1999) and (2001); Augoustakis (2003a); Wilson (1993) 220 and (2004); Cowan (2009).

⁸⁵ I shall explore this episode in more detail in Cowan (forthcoming).

arrived in a great whirlwind, though not abandoning the siege of Capua completely.

On one level, this is a straightforward reconnoitre, comparable to Turnus' scanning of the Trojan camp to find a vulnerable point; indeed Horsfall has indeed shown that the Virgilian scene evokes *Hannibal ad portas*, so that Silius creatively annotates this by returning it to its original context.⁸⁶ However, Silius' image goes even further in the way it parallels viewing, reading and conquest. The choice of *lustrō* combines its physical and visual meanings, as Hannibal both moves around the entrances (*OLD* s.v. *lustrō* 2) and scans them with his eyes (*OLD* s.v. *lustrō* 6); by collapsing the distinction between sensory perception and physical access, Silius prepares for the striking image whereby Hannibal enters the city with his eyes and penetrates into all parts of it by watching. The notion is facilitated by ancient ideas about the physicality of vision and especially about the physically invasive properties of the desiring gaze.⁸⁷

However, Silius is not merely conflating the physical invasion of the city with the reconnoitring which enables that invasion. Hannibal's gaze on Rome is not so much that of a tactician planning an assault as of a reader learning about the nature of the city. He learns (*discit*) like the addressee of a didactic poem, not the most promising avenues of attack or the strongest fortified positions, but the places and the causes of places, their aetiologies, as if he were reading the *Fasti* or Propertius 4.⁸⁸ Even here, though, comprehension is inseparable from conquest as the formal allusion of the co-ordinated polyptoton takes the reader back to Priam and the people of Priam, "a Homeric formula which had become proverbial for the passing fortune of a people."⁸⁹ The bold use of *legeret* for Hannibal's action foregrounds the notion that he is reading the textual city. It also recalls the equally striking use of the verb to describe the way in which Anchises, also on a hill (*tumulum*, *Aen.* 6.754) acted as a similar internal reader trying to understand the

⁸⁶ Horsfall (1974) on *Aen.* 9.65–68. Behind both lies Achilles' scanning of Hector's body at *Il.* 22.319–21; Silius connects the two by combinatorial imitation at 13.163–65, where Claudius scans the body of the Capuan Taurea, who is an embodiment of the city itself; see Cowan (2007a) 13–14.

⁸⁷ Desiring gaze: Fredrick (2002); Lovatt (2006); Reed (2007) especially 16–72. Relation to reading: King (2006).

⁸⁸ Cf. Spaltenstein (1990) 194: "*Causas* est typique des aitia et les récits sur l'origine de Rome étaient chers aux Romains."

⁸⁹ Wills (1996) 34, 41.

nature of Rome by reading and learning the faces opposite him and Aeneas (*aduersos legere et uenientum discere uultus*, *Aen.* 6.755). The general becomes not only a reader but a lover in his desire to comprehend and possess the object of his gaze;⁹⁰ the parallelism between the reading process, with its desire for knowledge and pursuit of fulfilment, and erotic desire is well established, especially in Freudian terms.⁹¹ Silius here triangulates the three strands of desire, for military conquest, erotic fulfilment, and intellectual knowledge. However, just as erotic desire is, almost by definition, impossible to fulfil, and Hannibal's conquest of Rome is endlessly deferred and ultimately frustrated, so his attempt as a reader to understand Rome is reduced to the level of a counterfactual by Fulvius' sudden return from Capua. Not only are Hannibal and the reader denied the opportunity to gain the ultimate object of their desire, to read, understand, and distinguish between the real and counterfactual Romes, but that opportunity itself becomes yet another case of what might have been.

⁹⁰ Cf. Augoustakis (2003a) 240 on *Pun.* 1.64–65: “Hannibal’s dream reveals the object of his ‘love’. The second line describes what is required for him to achieve the final goal that the first sentence so vividly expresses, and the verb *penetrat* powerfully invokes the violent entrance into Rome, which Hannibal craves.” He compares the current passage at n. 19.

⁹¹ Narrative desire: Brooks (1984); in the *Aeneid*: Mitchell-Boyask (1996). Lucretius’ depiction of Epicurus’ mastery of knowledge as both a military and sexual conquest: Keith (2000) 36–42; cf. Nugent (1994).

c. *Gender*

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ENGENDERING ORIENTALISM IN SILIUS' *PUNICA*

Alison M. Keith*

In his presentation of female characters, as in so many other facets of his epic, Silius takes his cue from Virgil.¹ The Augustan epicist introduces Dido early in the *Aeneid* in an exchange between Venus and her son Aeneas (1.338–68): identifying Dido as the sister of the king of Tyre (Pygmalion) and the widow of a wealthy Phoenician aristocrat (Syphaeus), Venus explains that after her brother had killed her husband she fled with the latter's wealth and a company of Tyrian citizens to Libya where, after many hardships and wanderings, she founded the city of Carthage. Deception is a keynote of Virgil's Dido-narrative, which offers in mythological form an explanation for the historical enmity between Rome and Carthage. In Virgil's epic, the Roman gods make Dido hospitable to the Trojans, shipwrecked in her territory, but Venus fears 'typical' Carthaginian double-dealing (1.661), evident already in Dido's flight from Tyre after the bloody family feud that would also have recalled for contemporary Roman readers the struggle between Cleopatra and her brothers over rule of Egypt (settled by Julius Caesar in favor of Cleopatra in 48 BC). As a result of Venus' machinations, Dido falls in love with Aeneas, just as the barbarian princesses and tragic heroines of the fabled East—Circe, Medea, Ariadne, the Amazon Penthesilea—and the historical Cleopatra had fallen in love with the heroes of classical epic—Odysseus, Jason, Theseus, Achilles—and the historical Marc Antony. Despite swearing a solemn oath not to remarry, she celebrates with Aeneas what she calls a marriage but Virgil characterizes as a fault (*culpam*, 4.172), according to the Roman cultural ideal of female chastity expressed in the term

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¹ On Silius' debt to Virgil, see, among others, Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986); Feeney (1991) 303–7; Wilson (1993) 219–20; Pomeroy (2000); Barchiesi (2001b) 333–35; and especially the essays by Ganiban (73–98), Klaassen (99–126), and Harrison (280–92) in this volume.

uniuira, “one-man (i.e., once-married) woman.” When Aeneas, on the bidding of the gods, resolves to leave Dido her love turns to hatred: she kills herself with his sword on a pyre, cursing him and his descendants and calling for an avenger—Roman readers would have recognized a reference to Hannibal—and eternal enmity between the two peoples (4.625–29).² The eastern provenance of Virgil’s war-mongering Dido resonates against the propaganda of Octavian against Antony, in the years before and immediately after the Battle of Actium in 31 BC, which re-describes the Roman civil wars of the 30s BC as “a conflict between a feminized East, represented by the Egyptian queen who ha[d] enslaved Antony and threaten[ed] to enslave all Roman men, and a masculine West, represented by Octavian, the ‘son’ of Caesar who [had] restore[d] liberty to Rome by conquering Cleopatra.”³

In a famous discussion of “Orientalism,” Edward Said defined it as “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and... ‘the Occident’,” while he drew attention to how this “basic distinction between East and West” functioned as a starting point for writers as diverse as Aeschylus and Victor Hugo, Dante and Karl Marx.⁴ Indeed, Said observed that “the demarcation between Orient and West...seems bold by the time of the *Iliad*.”⁵ By implication, he identified the origins of this division in ancient Greek thought and he explicitly discussed, at modest length, the contributions of Aeschylus and Euripides, Herodotus and Alexander the Great to the articulation of the division between West and Orient.⁶ Although he himself never examined the classical Latin literary and ancient Roman material contributions to this mode of thought, his analysis of its workings in European literature and scholarship from Homer to Bernard Lewis can leave us in no doubt about the importance of the specifically Roman literary and political contributions to the later European construction of Orientalism. Octavian’s anti-Antonian propaganda is crucial in this regard, as is Virgil’s redaction of its resonances in his Dido-narrative, which has left a lasting impact on European art, literature, and politics.⁷

² See also Ganiban (73) and Harrison (282) in this volume.

³ Keith (2000) 78.

⁴ Said (1978); quotation at 2.

⁵ Said (1978) 56.

⁶ Said (1978) 56–58. His suggestive discussion has been extended by, e.g., Hall (1989), in a now classic study of Greeks and barbarians, and Miller (1997).

⁷ Cf. Hamer (1993).

Said's outline of the Orientalist plot of Aeschylus' *Persians* well summarizes the Orientalizing plot of the first half of the *Aeneid*, and Dido's role in it:

Asia speaks through and by virtue of the European imagination, which is depicted as victorious over...that hostile 'other' world beyond the seas. To Asia are given the feelings of emptiness, loss, and disaster that seem thereafter to reward Oriental challenges to the West.⁸

Feminist critics have drawn attention to the sexist discursive structures that underlie both Orientalism and its classic analysis by Said, for in Aeschylus' tragedy (as well as in Said's critique) male also speaks for female, projecting on to her both violent aggression and ultimate failure.⁹ The co-implication of sexism with Orientalism illuminates several other constitutive features that Said identified in the articulation of that dividing line between East and West, including "the motif of the Orient as insinuating danger;"¹⁰ the "mysterious attraction" of "Eastern excesses"¹¹ and "an almost uniform association between the Orient and sex."¹² Virgil's opening description of Carthage in the *Aeneid* sets out the gendered geographical, historical, and political lines that demarcate Tyrian/Greek/Carthaginian East from Latin West and reify their opposition to one another (1.12–16), and Dido's numerous speeches in the fourth book reinforce the distinction between a defeated, distant, treacherous, feminine East and a powerful, clear, loyal, masculine West.¹³

Writing a century after Virgil's death, Silius renovates the Orientalist hierarchy of gender in which the Virgilian Dido is enmeshed, offering a programmatic rehearsal of its characteristic features in his proem:¹⁴

...da, Musa, decus memorare laborum
antiquae Hesperiae, quantosque ad bella crearit
et quot Roma uiros, sacri cum perfida pacti
gens Cadmea super regno certamina mouit. (*Pun.* 1.3–6)

⁸ Said (1978) 56.

⁹ Miller (1990) 118–22; Lewis (1996) 12–52. For a feminist analysis of the Latin epic representation of women and warfare, see Keith (2000) 65–131.

¹⁰ Said (1978) 57.

¹¹ Said (1978) 57.

¹² Said (1978) 188; cf. also 118 and 180.

¹³ Cf. Keith (2000) 114.

¹⁴ Translations are adapted from the Loeb edition of Duff (1934).

Grant me, O Muse, to record the splendid achievements of Italy in ancient days and to tell of all those heroes whom Rome brought forth for the strife, when the perfidious race of Cadmus broke their solemn bond and began the contest for sovereignty.

Silius undertakes to celebrate all Rome's great men (*quantosque... et quot... uiros*, 1.4–5)—thereby outdoing even Virgil's singular man (*arma uirumque cano*, *Aen.* 1.1)—for their conquest of Cadmus' Tyrians (*gens Cadmea*, *Pun.* 1.6).¹⁵ This Levantine people—ethnically different and geographically distant from the Romans—impiously break faith with both gods and men in their abrogation of the terms of their treaty with Rome (1.8–11).¹⁶ The Latin poet opposes loyal Roman masculinity to the treacherous *gens Cadmea* and their female founder, Dido, whose tutelary divinity, the goddess Juno, destines Carthage for Mediterranean pre-eminence. When Dido lands on the destined shore of Libya, having fled her brother's impious plans (*Pygmalioneis... terris/... fugiens fraterno crimine... /fatali Dido Libyes appellitur orae*, 1.21–23), she buys land and founds a new city:¹⁷

hic Iuno ante Argos (sic credidit alta uetustas)
ante Agamemnoniam, gratissima tecta, Mycenen
optauit profugis aeternam condere gentem. (*Pun.* 1.26–28)

Here—so remote antiquity believed—Juno elected to found for the exiles a nation to last forever, preferring it to Argos, and to Mycenae, the city of Agamemnon and her chosen dwelling-place.

Silius articulates Juno's ambitions for Carthage in the very terms Virgil uses of Roman supremacy at the outset of the *Aeneid* (*tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*, *Aen.* 1.33), and his revision of the Virgilian program underlines not only the perversity of Juno's plan for Eastern

¹⁵ On the Iliadic thematics of the *Punica* and the corporate heroism of the Romans in it, see Marks (2005a) 61–110 and (2005c) 529–30; on Silius' debt to Homer, see Juhnke (1972) and most recently Manuwald (2007) 82–87.

¹⁶ Spaltenstein (1986) 2 notes the antiquity of the charge of perfidy against the Phoenicians (already in Homer) and collects instances of Silius' application of the charge in his epic. The Flavian epicist conventionally contrasts Punic treachery with Roman loyalty (e.g., 9.435–37).

¹⁷ On the female chain of Virgilian causality in Silius' proem, see Küppers (1986) 45–92; on women in Silius' epic, see also La Penna (1981) 234–37 and most recently Augoustakis (2001) and (forthcoming).

(whether Tyrian or Greek) domination of the Mediterranean but also Roman foreknowledge of her ultimate failure.¹⁸

Juno's partiality for Carthage, despite her status as a member of Rome's Capitoline Triad of divinities (Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva), derives from her traditional syncretistic association with the great goddess of Phoenician Carthage, Tanit/Astarte, who was "a goddess of war, a heavenly goddess, a mother goddess and wet nurse, and, in addition, a virgin goddess."¹⁹ In her capacity as a goddess of war and fertility, Carthaginian Tanit has also been linked to an Ugaritic (Syrian) goddess also worshipped in Phoenician Tyre, Anath, whose consumption of blood and flesh has been interpreted as a predilection for human sacrifice²⁰ and possibly even child-sacrifice,²¹ for which there is some evidence (itself arguably an index of Orientalist scholarship) in the worship of Tanit at Carthage.²² Throughout the *Punica*, certainly, Silius' Juno gives unambiguous evidence of her commitment to the violence and tumult of battle, for she is animated by the same implacable hostility towards Rome that she manifests in the *Aeneid*.²³

uerum ubi magnam aliis Romam caput urbibus alte
exserere ac missas etiam trans aequora classes
totum signa uidet uictricia ferre per orbem,
iam propius metuens bellandi corda furore
Phoenicum exstimulat. sed enim conamine primae
contuso pugnae fractisque in gurgite coeptis
Sicanio Libycis iterum instaurata capessens
arma remolitur; dux agmina²⁴ sufficit unus
turbanti terras pontumque mouere paranti. (*Pun.* 1.29–37)

But when she saw Rome lifting her head high among aspiring cities, and even sending fleets across the sea to carry her victorious standards over all the earth, then the goddess felt the danger close and stirred up in the minds of the Phoenicians a frenzy for war. But the effort of their first campaign was crushed, and the enterprise of the Carthaginians was wrecked on the Sicilian sea; and then Juno took up the sword again for

¹⁸ An undeniable reality that underscores Hannibal's tragic heroism, as Ganiban points out in this volume (96–98).

¹⁹ Ahlström (1986) 311. On the goddess Tanit (Phoenician *TNT*), see Hvidberg-Hansen (1979); Ahlström (1986); and Markoe (2000) 118–25, 129–32.

²⁰ Hvidberg-Hansen (1979) 93.

²¹ Ahlström (1986) 312.

²² Stager (1980); Markoe (2000) 132–36.

²³ On Silius' Juno, see, e.g., Ramaglia (1952–53) and especially Feeney (1991) 303–4.

²⁴ See Ganiban in this volume (77) on reading *omnes* instead of *agmina*.

a fresh conflict. When she upset all things on earth and was preparing to stir up the sea, she found a sufficient instrument in a single leader.

It is striking that throughout the poem Silius typically refers to the Carthaginians as Phoenicians (as here, 1.33), Sidonians (beginning at 1.10), and Tyrians (beginning at 1.82), for Tyre, the mother-city of Carthage, and Sidon were both located in the Levant—unlike Carthage, which lay to the west of Italy, south of Sicily on the coast of North Africa. In fact, the poet explicitly aligns Libya with Asia (the Orient) and opposes it to Europe in a geographical excursus early in the poem:

Aeoliis candens Austris et lampade Phoebi
aestifero Libye torquetur subdita Cancro,
aut ingens Asiae latus aut pars tertia terris.
terminus huic roseos amnis Lageus ad ortus
septeno impellens tumefactum gurgite pontum.
et qua diuersas clementior adspicit Arctos,
Herculeo dirimente freto diducta propinquis
Europes uidet arua iugis. (*Pun.* 1.193–200)

Libya lies under the burning sign of Cancer, and is parched by the south winds of Aeolus and the sun's disk. It is either a huge offshoot of Asia or a third continent of the world. It is bounded on the rosy east by the river of Lagus [i.e., the Nile], which strikes the swollen sea with seven streams. But, where the land in milder mood faces the opposing Bears, it is cut off by the straits of Hercules, and, though parted from them, looks on the lands of Europe from its adjacent heights.

Although Silius is sure that Libya is not Europe (the West) and although he hesitates to identify the land too readily with Asia (1.195), his description aligns it with Egypt (where Lagus, one of Alexander's Macedonian generals, had founded the Ptolemaic dynasty) and the East, where the sun rises.²⁵

Like her Virgilian model, Silius' Juno acts through mortal intermediaries to oppose the destined Roman order and in the *Punica* her chosen instrument for war is Hannibal, who assumes the goddess' rage at the outset of the poem (*iamque deae cunctas sibi belliger induit iras/Hannibal*, 1.38–39) and repeatedly acts on her impetus as the epic progresses. Juno delights in Hannibal as a “man of blood” (*sanguineo tum laeta uiro*, 1.40), and she fires him for war (*haec...iuuenem facta ad*

²⁵ On Silius' geographical sources, see Nicol (1936).

Mauortia flammata, 1.55) with the promise of Roman defeats (1.42–54). For example, she appears to him the fourth book in the guise of the lake god of Trasimene and encourages him to cross the Apennines (4.722–38) by promising him glory in battle at the site of the lake. Similarly, in book 8, after the Carthaginian general suffers a setback in Latium, Juno is inspired by the prospect of the battle of Cannae to intervene and renew his hopes for success (8.26–27): *ad spes armorum et furialia uota reducit/praescia Cannarum Iuno atque elata futuris* (“Hannibal regained hope of victory and renewed his insane ambition, by help of Juno; the goddess foresaw the field of Cannae, and coming events filled her with pride”). Juno herself undertakes to attend her favorite on the battlefield at Cannae (*ipsa adero*, 8.37), where she plans “to drink at last the blood of Latium” (*Latii tandem potura cruorem*, 8.204). There she acts in Hannibal’s interest by assuming the form, first, of the cowardly Metellus, who unsuccessfully urges the Roman general Paulus to quit the field (10.45–71), and then as the Moor Gelesta, who succeeds in persuading Hannibal to remove to a distant part of the field (10.83–91).

Silius repeatedly subjects Hannibal to both Orientalist and sexist discursive pressures, through his status as the avatar of Juno, in her guise as the Punic/Phoenician goddess Tanit/Astarte, and as the descendant and avenger of Phoenician Dido.²⁶ Hannibal’s father Hamilcar, “sprung from the Tyrian house of ancient Barcas, reckoned his long descent from Belus” (*Sarrana*²⁷ *prisci Barcae de gente uetustos/a Belo numerabat auos*, 1.72–73) and thus shares the ancestry of Dido, whose father Virgil names as Belus (*Aen.* 1.621, 729–30; cf. *Pun.* 1.87–88), a Latinization of the Semitic Baal. Barcas offers Hannibal a model for unswerving adherence to Juno’s designs in his own enthusiastic partisanship of Dido’s cause (1.73–76):²⁸ *namque orba marito/cum fugeret Dido famulam Tyron, impia diri/Belides iuuenis uitauerat arma tyranni/et se participem casus sociarat in omnes* (“for, when Dido lost her husband and fled from Tyre reduced to slavery, the young scion of Belus had escaped the unrighteous sword of the dread tyrant, and had joined his fortunes with hers for weal or woe”). Moreover, Hannibal’s father dedicates

²⁶ On Hannibal’s literary and genealogical descent from Dido, see Keith (2000) 91–92; Barchiesi (2001b) 335–39; and Bernstein (2008) 136–39 and in this volume (380).

²⁷ Sarra was an ancient name for the city of Tyre; cf. *OLD* s.v. *Sarranus*.

²⁸ On Hannibal’s devotion to his ancestors, see Bernstein (2008) 135–39, with further bibliography, and Hardie (1993a) 96.

his son while still a child to continuing (the Virgilian) Dido's enmity towards the Romans at a ceremony conducted in a grove sacred to her (*sacrum... Elissae*, 1.81) at the centre of the city (1.81–91).²⁹ By emphasizing the Eastern origins of Dido and her Carthaginians in his ekphrasis of the temple, Silius assimilates the historical figure of Hannibal to the plane of classical (Virgilian) myth and marks him from the start as the feminized loser in a renewed struggle between Phoenician East and Roman West. Symbols of loss, death, and defeat permeate Dido's grove—in the form of yew-trees and pines, shadows and mournful statues (1.83–84, 86–87): *taxi circum et piceae squalentibus umbris/abdiderant caelique arcebant lumine, templum... stant marmore maesto/effigies...* (“round it stood yew-trees and pines with their melancholy shade, which hid it and kept away the light of heaven... Statues of mournful marble stood there...”). Aeneas' sword is called *Phrygius* (1.91), while the shades of the dead—Phoenix, Agenor, Belus, and their descendants—supplement the poet's insistence on Dido's Tyrian provenance with the familiar conventions of orientalist rhetoric.

It is here, at Dido's temple, that Hannibal swears an oath by his ancestress' ghost (*per manes, regina, tuos*, 1.119) to harry the Romans by fire and sword in perpetual warfare on land and at sea (*Romanos terra atque undis.../ferro ignique sequar*, 1.114–15).³⁰ In this heavily signaled allusion to Dido's call for an avenger to rise from her bones (*Aen.* 4.625–29), Hannibal inherits her mantle as a doomed Eastern challenger to Western (i.e., Roman) hegemony of the Mediterranean.

Thus Silius represents the Carthaginian general accepting the Galli-cians' gift of a shield depicting his city's Phoenician origins on the eve of the siege of Saguntum (2.395–431).³¹ On the shield, Dido is shown wounded on top of her funeral pyre, instructing future generations of Tyrians, i.e., the Carthaginians, in avenging warfare (*ipsa pyram super ingentem stans saucia Dido/mandabat Tyriis ultricia bella futuris*, 2.422–23), while Hannibal himself is portrayed breaking the treaty in fulfillment of her curse (2.451–52): *Hannibal abrupto transgressus foedere ripas/Poenorum populos Romana in bella uocabat* (“and there was Hannibal; having broken the treaty by crossing the river, he was summoning the Punic nations to battle against Rome”). In an ironic reminiscence of the

²⁹ See the discussion of Harrison in this volume (280–82) on the temple ekphrasis.

³⁰ On the oath scene, see Ganiban's analysis in this volume (74–83).

³¹ On Hannibal's shield, see the analyses of Ganiban (84–91) and Harrison (282–85) in this volume, with further bibliography.

Virgilian Aeneas' acceptance of a shield of divine manufacture from his mother Venus (*Aen.* 8.729–31), Silius' Hannibal dons the Gallician gift as he sets out to invest Saguntum (*tali sublimis dono noua tegmina latis/ aptat concutiens umeris*, "proud of such a gift, the leader fitted the new armour to his broad shoulders with a clang," 2.453–54). He thereby assumes the role, quite literally, of Dido's standard-bearer as he goes into battle against the Romans.

Juno's repeated recourse to metamorphosis and deception in her promotion of the interests of Carthage recalls Dido's deceptions in the *Aeneid* and underwrites the Punic propensity towards guile and concomitant disdain for plain dealing,³² characteristics which typically animate the Easterner in Orientalist plots. Thus in the *Punica*, Hannibal and the double-dealing Carthaginians are wholly responsible for the abrogation of the treaty with Rome that ended the First Punic War and gave Saguntum to Rome (cf. 1.5–11). Hannibal is moved from the outset by a desire to overthrow the treaty (*his super aevi/flore uirens auet Aegates abolere, parentum/dedecus, ac Siculo demergere foedera ponto*, "besides all this, [Hannibal's] youthful vigor longed to blot out the Aegates, the shame of the last generation, and to drown the treaty of peace in the Sicilian sea," 1.60–62) and his appeal to his compatriots lies as much in his duplicitous cunning as in his valor:

...exercitus una
Hannibalem uoce atque alacri certamine poscit.
huic studia accendit patriae uirtutis imago,
huic fama in populos iurati didita belli,
huic uirides ausis anni feruorque decorus
atque armata dolis mens et uis insita fandi. (*Pun.* 1.183–88)

The soldiers with one voice and with eager enthusiasm demanded Hannibal for their leader. Their favor was due to many causes—the reflection in him of his father's valor; the report, broadcast among the nations, that he was the sworn enemy of Rome; his youth eager for action and the fiery spirit that well became him; his heart equipped with guile, and his native eloquence.

Indeed Silius characterizes the Carthaginian soldiery *tout court* as feminized practitioners of Eastern guile and deception (3.231–34): *princeps signa tulit Tyria Carthagine pubes/membra leuis celsique decus fraudata*

³² On Carthaginian perfidy in the *Punica*, see Thomas (2001); on *fides* in the *Punica*, see Burck (1988).

superbum/corporis, at docilis fallendi et nectere tectos/numquam tarda dolos (“foremost in the ranks were the soldiers from Tyrian Carthage. Light of limb were they, and the glory of lofty stature was denied them; but they were readily taught to deceive, and never slow to lay secret traps for the enemy”). The feminine collective noun *pubes* (like *gens* in the proem, 1.6), in conjunction with their Tyrian provenance (3.231), weak limbs (3.232), and crimson dress (*et rubrae uelamine uestis*, 3.236; cf. their leader Mago’s “purple-clad figure,” *fulgens ostro*, 3.238), emasculates the Carthaginian youth and predestines them for defeat at the hands of the Roman West’s properly masculine men (cf. *quantosque... et quot uiros*, 1.5–6). The effeminate Carthaginians are apparently predisposed to treachery, as the discursive strategies of sexism and Orientalism work together in mutual support.

Throughout the *Punica*, indeed, the Carthaginian general’s adherents tend to be women and/or Easterners, as well as tools of Juno, like himself. Thus the lake-god whose identity the goddess assumes in the fourth book to encourage her favorite to engage the Romans at Trasimene is an(other) Asian (4.737–38): *namque ego sum, celsis quem cinctum montibus ambit/Tmolo missa manus, stagnis Thrasymennus opacis* (“for I am the lake surrounded by lofty mountains, round which dwell the settlers from Tmolus; I am Trasimene, the lake of shady waters”). Silius includes a brief geo-ethnographic digression in the following book, detailing Thrasymennus’ Asian provenance, from the area around the Lydian river Tmolus (5.7–23).³³ The river’s Eastern origins align it with the foreign forces that “work against the Romans, especially in the first phase of the war, during the terrible defeats at Ticinus, Trebia, Trasimene, and Cannae.”³⁴ Moreover Silius’ characterization of the lake-god as a beautiful youth, a *puer delicatus*, exemplifies the mutual support the discursive structures of sexism and Orientalism provide one another in the *Punica*. For the nymph Agylle ravishes Thrasymennus and conceals him in the depths of her watery cave:

uerum ardens puero castumque exuta pudorem
(nam forma certare deis, Thrasymenne, ualeres)
litore correptum stagnis demisit Agylle,
flore capi iuuenum primaueo lubrica mentem
nympha nec Idalia lenta incaluisse sagitta.

³³ See also Vinchesi (2004); Augoustakis (2005) on word-play with Thrasymennus’ Greek name; and Cowan (2009).

³⁴ Augoustakis (2010).

solatae uiridi penitus fouere sub antro
 Naiades amplexus undosaeque regna tremementem.
 hinc dotale lacus nomen, lateque Hymenaeo
 conscia lasciuo Thrasymennus dicitur unda. (*Pun.* 5.15–23)

But the nymph Agylle loved the young Trasimene; and indeed in beauty he could contend with the gods themselves. Casting off maiden shame, she seized him on the shore and carried him down to the depths; for her young heart was quick to feel the spell of youthful beauty, nor was she slow to catch fire from the arrow of the Idalian goddess. The Naiads, in their green cave far below, comforted and cherished the boy, when he shrank from his bride's embrace and that watery world. From him the lake, a gift from the bride, got its name; and the water, aware through all its extent of the marriage joy, still bears the name of Trasimene.

A youth of effeminate beauty, Thrasymennus suffers further emasculation in his rape by the nymph Agylle and removal to the Naiads' grotto beneath the waves. The feminine imagery of water and cave lends itself all too readily to Freudian interpretation as the geography of female sexuality and male castration.³⁵ In his Eastern provenance, subordination to women, and Junonian instrumentality, Thrasymennus offers only an ill-omened model to Hannibal.

Similarly, in the eighth book, Juno sends Hannibal an emissary, the river nymph Anna Perenna, to urge him to engage the Romans at Cannae.³⁶ Silius identifies this Anna with Dido's homonymous sister and represents Juno appealing to her blood relationship with the Carthaginian general (8.30–31): '*sanguine cognato iuuenis tibi, diua, laborat/ Hannibal, a uestro nomen memorabile Belo...*' ("Goddess, a youth akin to you is in sore straits—Hannibal, a famous name descended from your ancestor Belus the Phoenician..."). Anna acts on this request out of an abiding commitment to her people and her sister (8.40–42): '*haud*' *inquit 'tua ius nobis praecepta morari./sit fas, sit tantum, quaeso, retinere fauorem/ antiquae patriae mandataque magna sororis*' ("It is my duty," she said, "to do your bidding without delay. One thing only I beg: suffer me to keep the goodwill of my former country and to carry out the solemn behests of my sister"). The digression that follows (8.44–191) explains Anna's arrival and 'death' in the form of eternal union in Numicius' waters

³⁵ Segal (1969) 24. For the pervasive feminization of the ground of heroic action in Latin epic, see Keith (2000) 36–64, especially 56–57 on Pyrene in *Pun.* 3; and cf. Augoustakis (2003a).

³⁶ On the role of Dido in the Anna Perenna episode, see Dietrich (2004) 2–7. See also Ganiban (91–96) and Ariemma (241–47) in this volume.

in Latium, in ominous anticipation of Hannibal's ultimate defeat in Italy. Anna revives Hannibal's desire for battle, however, by appealing to their shared ethnic background and ancestry:³⁷

quid tantum ulterius, rex o fortissime gentis
Sidoniae, ducis cura aegrescente dolorem?
omnis iam placata tibi manet ira deorum,
omnis Agenoridis rediit fauor. eia, age, segnes
 rumpe moras, rape Marmaricas in proelia uires...
me tibi, ne dubites, summi matrona Tonantis
misit. ego Oenotris aeternum numen in oris
concelebror, uestri generata e sanguine Beli... (*Pun.* 8.211–15, 219–21)

Mightiest ruler of the Phoenicians, why do you persist in nursing this great grief in sick anxiety? All the wrath of the gods against you has now been appeased, all their goodwill has come back to the children of Agenor. Rise up, then, without loitering or delay! Speed on the forces of Marmarica to battle!... I was sent to you—doubt it not—by the consort of the almighty Thunderer. Though I am honored in the land of Italy as an immortal goddess, I was born of the seed of Belus, your ancestor...

Enmeshed in the fatal recension of the Phoenician East, Hannibal is fired for war by feminine forces whose record of loss and failure dooms him as well (8.227–31): *'nympha, decus generis, quo non sacratius ullum/numen' ait 'nobis, felix oblata secundes./ast ego te compos pugnae Carthaginis arce/marmoreis sistam templis iuxtaque dicabo/aequatam gemino simulacri munere Dido'* ("Nymph, glory of our nation, as sacred to me as any deity," he said, "be propitious and give a favorable issue to your promises. If I may fight a battle, I will set your image in a marble shrine on the citadel of Carthage and dedicate beside it an image of Dido, and both shall be honored alike"). The very terms in which Hannibal promises Anna honor reveal that though he may win the battle, he cannot win the war.

Hannibal's Eastern challenge to the Roman West is further undermined by Silius' representation of some of his most memorable mortal partisans as women. Thus in addition to the prominence of his ancestors, the dead and deified Dido and Anna, Hannibal's Amazonian adherent Asbyte receives the first *aristeia* of the poem (2.56–269).³⁸ A literary descendant of Virgil's Camilla, Silius' Asbyte is introduced as

³⁷ These lines belong to the so-called *additamentum Aldinum*, on which see Ganiban in this volume (94 n. 68). I follow the general scholarly consensus on the lines as genuine.

³⁸ On Silius' *aristeiae*, see Wilson (1993) 224.

the offspring of a Libyan water-nymph (Tritonis, 2.65) and a Garamanian king (Hiarbas, 2.58) who traces his lineage back to Jupiter (*Hammone genitus*, 2.59; *proauumque Iouem*, 2.66).³⁹ Although she is an African princess, the poet suggestively aligns the Libyan landscape of her birth with the fabled East:

Hammone hic genitus Phorcynidos antra Medusae
Cinyphiumque Macen et iniquo e sole calentes
Battiadas late imperio sceptrisque regebat.
cui patrius Nasamon aeternumque arida Barce,
cui nemora Autololum atque infidae litora Syrtis
parebant nullaque leuis Gaetulus habena. (*Pun.* 2.59–64)

Her father was the son of Ammon and ruled with extended sway the caves of Medusa, daughter of Phorcys, and the Macae who dwell by the river Cinyphs, and the Cyrenians whom the cruel sun scorches; he was obeyed by the Nasamones, hereditary subjects, by ever-parched Barce, by the forests of the Autololes, by the shore of treacherous Syrtis, and by the Gaetulians who usually ride without reins.

Surveying Hiarbas' holdings along the African coast, Silius plots the eastward extent of his empire in Cyrene and dry Barce (2.61; the eastward impetus is apparently natural to the Carthaginians, as Anna will take refuge with Battus when she flees Carthage after Dido's death, 8.54–64). Asbyte's provenance from the treacherous and violent landscape of the monstrous Medusa (2.59) and the deceptive Syrtes aligns her with the dangerous regiment of female monsters who challenge, but never defeat, the heroes of classical mythology and epic (the Lernean Hydra, the Chimaera, the Harpies, among others).⁴⁰

Silius also assimilates Asbyte to the Amazons,⁴¹ female warriors whose origins classical authors locate in the East, for like them she is a protégé of Diana:

haec ignara uiri uacuoque adsueta cubili
uenatu et siluis primos defenderat annos;
non calathis mollita manus operataue fuso
Dictynnam et saltus et anhelum impellere planta
cornipedem ac strauisse feras immitis amabat,
quales Threiciae Rhodopen Pangaeaeque lustrant

³⁹ On Asbyte, see especially Küppers (1986) 141–53; Vinchesi (2005) 108–22; Uccellini (2006); and Augoustakis (2010).

⁴⁰ On this point, see also Uccellini (2006).

⁴¹ On the Amazons, see DuBois (1982) and Tyrrell (1984).

saxisis nemora alta iugis cursuque fatigant
 Hebrum innupta manus; spreti Ciconesque Getaeque
 et Rhesi domus et lunatis Bistones armis. (Pun. 2.68–76)

She was a maiden, ever lay alone, and had spent her early years in the forest-chase; never did the wool-basket soften her hands nor the spindle give her occupation; but she loved Dictynna and the woodlands, and to urge on with her heel the panting steed and lay low wild beasts without mercy. Even so the band of Amazons in Thrace traverse Rhodope and the high forests on the stony ridges of Mount Pangaeus, and tire out the Hebrus by their speed; they spurn all suitors—the Cicones and Getae, the royal house of Rhesus, and the Bistones with their crescent-shaped shields.

She is even attended on the field before Saguntum by a troop of warrior maidens (2.82–84) and she carries into battle the Amazons' crescent-shaped shield (*Thermodontiaci munita pelta*, 2.80). The Amazons' epic pedigree—opponents of Achilles and the Greeks at Troy, of Hercules and Theseus at Athens, of Aeneas and the proto-Romans in Italy—marks out Asbyte (and Hannibal) as, ultimately, the loser(s) in this contest. Thus Asbyte is the first significant Carthaginian casualty, her death presaged by the fall of her Amazonian comrade Harpe (2.116–24)⁴² just as Hannibal will be the last, his death anticipated beyond the conclusion of Silius' epic (2.700–7, 13.885–93, 17.362–67, 376–84, 558–68).

Like the warriors of the wealthy East, moreover, as well as Virgil's Camilla and her killer Chloreus in *Aeneid* 11, Asbyte wears rich and exotic battle-finery on to the killing fields before Saguntum:

Ergo habitu insignis patrio, religata fluentem
 Hesperidum crinem dono dextrumque feroci
 nuda latus Marti ac fulgentem tegmine laeuam
 Thermodontiaci munita in proelia pelta
 fumantem rapidis quatiebat cursibus axem. (Pun. 2.77–81)

And thus conspicuous in her native dress—with her long hair bound by a gift from the Hesperides, with her right breast bared for battle, while the shield glittered on her left arm and the target of the Amazons protected her in battle—she urged on her smoking chariot with furious speed.

⁴² On the etymological play with Harpe's name, see Augoustakis (2005).

Her battle-gear attracts the attention of the Saguntine Theron (2.166–67), *Asbytes currum et radiantis tegmina laenae*⁴³/*poscebat uotis gemmataque lumina peltae* (“he raised his ambition to Asbyte’s chariot, the glittering mantle that covered her, and her bright jeweled target”), in a contest that pits the Amazonian Asbyte against a priest of Hercules armed with club and lion skin (2.153–57), and thus reprises Hercules’ defeat of the Amazon Hippolyte in myth. The hierarchy of gender and westward impetus of *translatio imperii* work together to naturalize as inevitable Asbyte’s brutal death at Theron’s hands:

tum saltu Asbyten conantem linquere pugnas
 occupat incussa gemina inter tempora claua
 feruentesque rotas turbataque frena pauore
 disiecto spargit collisa per ossa cerebro
 ac rapta properans caedem ostentare bipenni
 amputat e curru reuolutae uirginis ora.
 necdum irae positae. celsa nam figitur hasta
 spectandum caput; id gement ante agmina Poenum
 imperat et properre currus ad moenia uertant. (*Pun.* 2.197–205)

Then, as Asbyte tried to flee from the fight, he sprang to stop her and smote her between the twin temples with his club; he spattered the glowing wheels and the reins, disordered by the terrified horses, with the brains that gushed from the broken skull. Then he seized her axe and, eager to display his slaughter of her, cut off the head of the maiden, as she rolled out of her chariot. Not yet was his rage sated; for he fixed her head on a lofty pike, for all to see, and bade men bear it in front of the Punic army, and drive the chariot with speed to the town.

Amazonian Asbyte falls naturally to Hercules’ priest, Easterner to Westerner, and the outcome is properly memorialized in a tableau that instructs both the internal audience (of Carthaginians) and the external audience (of Romans) in the narrative decorum of her death.⁴⁴

The final female partisan of Hannibal whom we may consider is his wife, Imilce.⁴⁵ Although of Spanish birth (3.97–100), Imilce comes of Eastern stock, for Silius traces her ancestry to Bacchus’ conquest of Spain:

⁴³ On the reading *laenae*, printed by Duff (1934), see Augoustakis (2010).

⁴⁴ As Uccellini (2006) 253 rightly points out: “Un Amazzone, dunque, Asbyte, ma non Amazzone sola, e un Amazzone soprattutto in quanto destinata ineluttabilmente a soccombere.”

⁴⁵ On Imilce, see Fucecchi (1992) and especially Augoustakis (2010).

tempore quo Bacchus populos domitabat Hiberos
 concutiens thyrsos atque armata Maenades Calpen,
 lascivus genitus Satyri nymphaeque Myrice
 Milichus indigenis late regnarat in oris
 cornigeram attollens genitoris imagine frontem.
 hinc patriam clarumque genus referebat Imilce
 barbarica paulum uitiato nomine lingua. (3.101–7)

When Bacchus was conquering the Spanish peoples and attacking Calpe with the staves and spears of his Maenads, Milichus, born of a lustful Satyr and the nymph Myrice, had held wide dominion in his native land; and horns, like those of his father, grew upon his forehead. From him Imilce drew her nationality and noble blood; but the name of Milichus had suffered a slight corruption in the native speech.

In his triumph, François Spaltenstein remarks, Bacchus masters the whole world, though classical authors conventionally locate his conquests in the Orient, as indeed does Silius later in this very book (3.615): *et Eoos Baccho cedente triumphos* (“and Bacchus yielding Eastern triumphs [to Domitian]”).⁴⁶ The Flavian epicist thus bestows on Imilce an Eastern provenance through her ancestry and endows her, through the Bacchic context of her father’s birth, with a propensity towards Maenadism which he illustrates at some length in the following book, after Hannibal decides to send her from Spain to Carthage for safety during the war (3.61–157).

In the fourth book, Silius reports the Carthaginian tradition of child-sacrifice, whose origins he attributes to Dido:⁴⁷

mos fuit in populis, quos condidit aduena Dido,
 poscere caede deos ueniam ac flagrantibus aris,
 infandum dictu, paruos imponere natos.
 urna reducebat miserandos annua casus
 sacra Thoanteae ritusque imitata Dianae. (Pun. 4.765–69)

The nation which Dido founded when she landed in Libya was accustomed to appease the gods by human sacrifices and to offer up their young children—horrible to tell—upon fiery altars. Each year the lot was cast, and the tragedy was repeated, recalling the sacrifices offered to Diana in the kingdom of Thoas.

The ritual of child-sacrifice descends from Dido’s foundation and characterizes her not as a generative ancestress of her people but as a

⁴⁶ Spaltenstein (1986) 190.

⁴⁷ On this episode, see Augoustakis (2008).

vengeful mother and avenging deity who consumes her own descendants. Silius compares the Carthaginian rites to those of the goddess Diana (Artemis) at Tauris in the Crimea, another barbaric Eastern goddess who demands of her worshippers human sacrifice. When the lot identifies Hannibal's son as the customary victim for sacrifice (4.770–71), Imilce resists the Carthaginian general Hanno's determination to kill her son in a display of Bacchic fury that inflames the populace, already terrified by the prospect of Hannibal's wrath:

Asperat haec foedata genas lacerataque crines
atque urbem complet maestis clamoris Imilce,
Edonis ut Pangaea super trieteride mota
it iuga et inclusum suspirat pectore Bacchum.
ergo inter Tyrias facibus ceu subdita matres
clamat: 'io coniunx, quocumque in cardine mundi
bella moues, huc signa refer. uiolentior hic est,
hic hostis propior...' (Pun. 4.774–82)

Their fear was heightened by Imilce, who tore her cheeks and hair and filled the city with woeful cries. As a Bacchant in Thrace, maddened by the god's recurring festival, speeds over the heights of Mount Pangaeus and breathes forth the wine-god who dwells in her breast, so Imilce, as if set on fire, cried aloud among the women of Carthage: "O husband, hearken! Whatever the region of the world where you are fighting now, bring your army hither; here is a foe more furious and more pressing..."

Imilce's Maenadism comes 'naturally' to her, as a descendant of a Satyr in Bacchus' triumphal train and aligns her with the Virgilian queens Dido and Amata whose opposition to Aeneas' mission Virgil figures as Bacchic (*Aen.* 4.300–3, 7.385–405). In the Carthaginian context, it is grimly appropriate that Silius here reworks very closely not only the Virgilian simile comparing Dido to a Bacchante (*Aen.* 4.300–3), but also Virgil's description of Anna's terror at her discovery of the dying Dido (*Aen.* 4.672–73).⁴⁸ As Augoustakis has cogently argued, however, although Imilce's argument against the sacrifice of her son must win the approval of the sympathetic reader of Silius' epic, the form in which she makes it can only undermine her credibility with both internal and external audiences.⁴⁹ Hannibal's decision at the end of the book, therefore, to spare his son confirms his (and Carthage's)

⁴⁸ Spaltenstein (1986) 328.

⁴⁹ Augoustakis (2008) 60–66.

destiny of defeat in war against Rome, since he commits his son to renew the same doomed contest he himself has taken up (4.815–17): *spes, o nate, meae Tyriarumque unica rerum/Hesperia minitante salus, terraque fretoque/certare Aeneadis, dum stabit uita, memento* (“you, my son, on whom my hopes rest, you, who are the only safeguard of Carthaginian power against the menace of Italy, remember to fight against the Aeneadae all your life long”).⁵⁰

Silius’ representation of Hannibal as a female-focused hero—favorite of Juno and descendant of Dido, patron of Asbyrte and husband of Imilce—inscribes him, and his countrymen (the effeminate Tyrians), in the position of the losers in the ‘battle of the sexes’ and thereby renders impotent the Carthaginian challenge to Roman hegemony of the Mediterranean. The poet complements this pervasive feminization by association of Hannibal and the Carthaginians with the androcentrism of Roman women, in his repeated emphasis on their commitment to the masculine goals of Rome’s senatorial leadership. In Book 10, for example, Cinna explains to Hannibal the martial ancestry of the Roman soldier Cloelius:⁵¹

...mansuescere corda
nescia, pro superi! et nil non immite parata
gens Italum pro laude pati: bis Cloelia senos
nondum complerat primaevi corporis annos,
una puellarum Laurentum et, pignora pacis,
inter uirgineas regi tramissa cateruas.
facta uirum sileo. rege haec et foedere et annis
et fluuio spretis mirantem interrita Thybrim
tranauit frangens undam puerilibus ulnis.
cui si mutasset sexum natura, reuerti
forsan Tyrrhenas tibi non licuisset in oras,
Porsena. sed iuueni, ne sim tibi longior, hinc est
et genus et clara memorandum uirgine nomen. (Pun. 10.490–502)

But Roman hearts could not be tamed—witness heaven!—but were ready to face any danger for the sake of glory. With other Roman maidens Cloelia was sent across the river to the king as a pledge for peace—young Cloelia who was not twelve years old. Of brave deeds done by men I say nothing; but this maiden, in spite of the king and the treaty, in spite of her youth and the river, swam fearlessly across

⁵⁰ See Hardie (1993a) 50–51.

⁵¹ See Fucecchi (2005) 12–17 on the emergence of the Roman past in crucial moments in Hannibal’s career in the poem.

the astonished Tiber, stemming the stream with childish arms. If nature had changed her sex, perhaps Porsena would never have been able to return to the Tyrrhenian land. But, not to detain you longer, from her this young Cloelius is descended, and owes his glorious name to that famous maiden.

Cloelia acts out of the very desire for glory (10.492) that animates Rome's many heroes, from Cloelius here to Scipio at the end of the epic (*laudibus ac meritis*, 17.652), whose glory and deeds Silius celebrates throughout his poem.

The heroism of the masculine Roman west constitutes a perfectly balanced counterweight to the fatal eastern effeminacy of the Carthaginian foe in the Orientalist and sexist plot of Silius' epic. The Flavian poet writes as an exponent and advocate of Roman power in the Mediterranean, and he takes as the subject of his poem the very moment when Tyrian Carthage succumbs to Roman imperial rule. Defeated and distant, Carthage no longer poses a challenge to Roman military power in Silius' day, but the sexist and Orientalist discursive structures that shape his narrative of their decisive conflict continue to underwrite the role of imperial Roman armies, administrators, and bureaucracies in the proconsular province of Roman North Africa.

d. *Epic and Society*

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

FAMILY AND STATE IN THE *PUNICA*

Neil W. Bernstein*

1. *Family and state*

Silius' *Punica* represents its central figures both as members of aristocratic families and as leaders of armies and states. The narrative frequently indicates the conceptual overlap between these roles. The *Punica* draws thereby on a lengthy Roman literary tradition of representing the leader's authority over a group as similar to that of a father over his family.¹ Valerius Maximus, for example, endeavors to correlate poor performance in both the political and the familial spheres. He views Catiline's murder of his son as stemming from the same motives that led to his attempt to overthrow the state: *eodem deinde animo ciuem gerens quo patrem egerat, filii pariter manibus et nefarie attemptatae patriae poenas dedit* ("acting thereafter as a citizen in much the same spirit that he had acted as a parent, he paid punishment equally to his son's shade and to the country that he had treacherously assaulted," V. Max. 9.1.9).² Even before the Julio-Claudian and Flavian emperors began to formalize the title *pater patriae*, Cicero and Caesar had also been represented as symbolic fathers of the state.³ Responsibilities to state and to family may present the leader with conflicting obligations. Regulus' return to Carthage in spite of the pleas of his family offers a typical example of how earlier Roman literary tradition resolves such conflicts in favor of the needs of the state.⁴ The responsibilities of the citizen similarly take priority over familial obligations in Ciceronian narratives of Fabius

* This chapter draws on material presented in greater detail in Bernstein (2008) 132–59 and 179–92. I thank Antony Augoustakis, William Dominik, and Alison Keith for many helpful comments and suggestions.

¹ Pomeroy (2000) 160–62; Mezzanotte (1995).

² Translations are my own.

³ Alföldi (1971) and Stevenson (1992). Cicero: *parentem patriae* (Pis. 6); Caesar: *cognomen patris patriae* (Suet. *Jul.* 76).

⁴ Regulus: Cic. *Off.* 1.39, 3.99; Hor. *Carm.* 3.5.

and Scipio.⁵ In Cicero's *De Re Publica*, for example, Paulus tells the younger Scipio that *pietas* toward the state comes before *pietas* toward ancestors and other relatives: *sed sic, Scipio, ut avus hic tuus, ut ego qui te genui, iustitiam cole et pietatem, quae cum magna in parentibus et propinquis, tum in patria maxima est* ("But thus, Scipio, just as this man your grandfather, just as I who engendered you, worship justice and *pietas*, which is both of great importance for parents and relatives and of the greatest importance for the fatherland," Cic. *Rep.* 6.16).

When a single charismatic ruler dominates the state, however, the conceptual connections between paternal and monarchical authority correspondingly shift. Contemporary artwork, architecture, coinage, and literature present Domitian in his overlapping roles as the symbolic father of the Roman state and as a member of the Flavian *gens*.⁶ The emperor's lineage became divine as the result of the deification of his father Vespasian and several of his other relatives. Contemporary sources urge the emperor to demonstrate *pietas* toward his divine relatives and to perpetuate the Flavian dynasty by producing an heir. In Silius Italicus' *Punica*, the "synecdochic heroes" Fabius and Scipio⁷ share some of these imperial qualities of divine descent and charismatic paternal authority. A distant descendant of Hercules, Fabius "bore all the arms and men within himself" (*in sese cuncta arma uirosque gerebat*, *Pun.* 7.8), while Scipio, the son of Jupiter, leads troops who depend on him alone during the African campaign (*Pun.* 17.399–400). Both men enjoy the title of "father" of their armies, while a conflict between leader and subordinate (Fabius and Minucius, 7.494–750) is compared to a son's disobedience to a father. Scipio approximates the role of proto-*princeps* most closely through his divine descent and victories on the battlefield.⁸

This section examines how Fabius, Scipio, and other leaders in the *Punica* perceive the correlation between their political and familial roles. Hannibal's response to his father Hamilcar's injunction to take vengeance on the Romans demonstrates filial obedience pushed to a dangerous extreme. Fabius' response to the insubordination of Minucius involves him in a familial conflict: he rejects his own son's suggestion that Hannibal should be allowed to defeat Minucius by arguing

⁵ Fabius: Cic. *Off.* 1.84, *Sen.* 10–14; see Dyck (1996) 220.

⁶ See Susplugas (2003) and Jones (1992).

⁷ Hardie (1993a) 3–10; Marks (2005a) 78–81.

⁸ Fucecchi (1993) 48; Ripoll (1998a) 492–95; Marks (2005a) 187–94 and 209–44.

that guaranteeing his soldiers' safety comes before avenging Minucius' insult. Fabius' virtuous response to his son contrasts with an Italian leader's failure to exercise paternal and political authority appropriately. The treacherous Pacuvius allies Capua with the Carthaginians and forbids his son to attempt to assassinate Hannibal. Communication with his divine father grants Scipio both the certainty concerning his military success that the gods deny to Hannibal and permits him to coordinate familial and political obligations more successfully than any other leader in the epic. He is the *ultor patriae domusque* ("avenger of his fatherland and of his kinsmen," 16.593).

Hannibal. Hannibal inverts or perverts many of the characteristic virtues of the traditional epic hero.⁹ As the hero of *pietas*, Aeneas leads the Trojan refugees toward the foundation of a new and greater society, but Hannibal's devotion toward his ancestors takes the form of *furor* which ultimately leads to the defeat of Carthage. Hannibal's father, Hamilcar, "skilled at nourishing madness sowed war with the Romans into his son's youthful breast" (*sollers nutrire furores/Romanum seuit puerili in pectore bellum*, *Pun.* 1.79–80), in a ritual in Dido's temple at the opening of the epic (*Pun.* 1.81–139).¹⁰ Hannibal's inherited *furor* thereby contrasts with the self-generated *furor* of two of his literary models, Sallust's Catiline and Lucan's Caesar.¹¹ Throughout the epic, mad desire for vengeance displaces Hannibal's concern for Carthage's safety.¹² In the debate between the Carthaginian leaders after the attack on Saguntum, for example, Hanno accuses Hannibal of being maddened by his father's unquiet ghost (*Pun.* 2.296–98) and criticizes his reckless involvement of Carthage in an unwinnable war with the Romans. The subsequent events of the epic will prove both Hanno's diagnosis and prediction largely correct. By compromising his leadership, Hannibal's *furor* deforms the otherwise laudable virtue of devotion toward his ancestors.

Hannibal has inherited not just *furor* from the previous generation but a legacy of vengeance that stretches back even beyond the founding of Carthage. The ritual in Dido's temple figures Hannibal as the

⁹ Marks (2005a) 88–92; Ripoll (1998a) 49–53 and 128–30.

¹⁰ Laudizi (1989) 102–7; Tupet (1980); cf. also Ganiban's (74–83), Harrison's (280–82), and Keith's (359–61) essays in this volume.

¹¹ Kißel (1979) 104–12.

¹² Küppers (1986) 61–72; on epic madness, see Hershkowitz (1998a).

avenger that Dido predicted would arise “from her bones” to persecute the Aeneadae (*Aen.* 4.625–29).¹³ Hannibal rallies his troops at Saguntum with the boast that he can trace “his origins to eastern Belus” (*Eoi deductus origine Beli, Pun.* 2.49), the great-great-grandson of Inachus (Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.1). These claims, based on generative memory, associate the Barcid clan through shared descent with enemies of the Romans’ Trojan ancestors. In the *Aeneid*, Turnus declares his Inachid ancestry by displaying Inachus and Io on his shield (*Aen.* 7.789–92) and thus his distant genealogical connection with the Argive sackers of Troy.¹⁴ Descent from Belus and Inachus, assumption of the role of Dido’s avenger, and inheritance of his father’s *furor* all greatly constrain Hannibal’s freedom of independent action. By contrast, his opponent Scipio rarely looks past the previous generation in describing his ancestral legacy. It is sufficient for him to be the presumptive son of his human father and the actual son of Jupiter.

By introducing the otherwise unattested figure of Hannibal’s son, Silius creates a narrative parallel between the three generations of Barcae in the *Punica* and the three generations of Aeneadae in the *Aeneid*.¹⁵ The dead patriarch in each of these lineages imposes his unfulfilled mission on the father, whether resettling the Trojans or defeating the Romans. While the youngest member of the lineage remains still too immature to lead, he nevertheless represents both the hopes and the needs of the next generation. Where Virgil’s Aeneas instructs Ascanius to use his ancestors as *exempla* (*Aen.* 12.438–40), Hannibal wants to reproduce his father’s legacy of *furor* in his own son. He orders his wife Imilce to repeat the ritual in Dido’s temple when his own son matures (*Pun.* 3.81–83).¹⁶ Aeneas’ shield narrates a glorious future for the Romans who will be born from his son Ascanius (*Aen.* 8.627–29), but Hannibal’s shield offers a retrospective view. The shield’s inclusion of the previous generation of Hannibal’s ancestors suggests that he will recapitulate their history and suffer a similar defeat to theirs in the First Punic War (*Pun.* 2.406–31).¹⁷ Virgil’s Mercury commands Aeneas to depart from Carthage in part out of concern for Ascanius’

¹³ Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2494–96; Küppers (1986) 73–92; Hardie (1993a) 64.

¹⁴ Hannah (2004).

¹⁵ Ripoll (1998a) 52, 66–69; Fucecchi (1992).

¹⁶ Laudizi (1989) 114–16; on Imilce and ritual, see Augoustakis (2008) 57–66.

¹⁷ Laudizi (1989) 108–11; Küppers (1986) 154–64; Vessey (1975); and extensively, Ganiban (84–91) and Harrison (282–85) in this volume.

inheritance of his kingdom in Italy (*Aen.* 4.268–76).¹⁸ This is one of the *Aeneid*'s clearest examples of the assimilation of leaderly and familial obligations. Aeneas' failure to proceed to Italy would prevent both the Trojans from settling in their new homeland and his son from entering into his rightful inheritance. In the *Punica*, by contrast, Hannibal's departure from his wife Imilce occurs before Mercury's deceptive epiphany, and his dreams of his father concern his own glory (*Pun.* 3.139–45). He describes his son alternately as *pignus belli* (3.80) and *belli...heres* (*Pun.* 4.814), a pledge and inheritor of the perpetual war with the Romans handed down by his grandfather Hamilcar.¹⁹ Hannibal cannot perceive any possibility of structural difference between the careers of each generation of his lineage. The repetitive narrative of the three generations of Barcae prefigures the fate of their society. While Carthage simply repeats its failure until it is eventually obliterated, Rome rises to become the world's dominant power.²⁰

Hannibal's inheritance from his ancestors is a legacy of madness that leaves him unable to escape the repetitive paradigm of defeat. Fabius, Marcellus, and the elder Scipio each offer more positive examples for emulation to their sons. Madness is never a stimulus to effective action for them. While Scipio's insistence on avenging his dead father and uncle presents some parallels with Hannibal's oath to his father, he acts in the context of Jupiter's approval. The contrast with Hannibal's means of discharging his obligations to his ancestors enables a fuller appreciation of Scipio's virtues and by extension those of the *princeps* whom he prefigures.

Fabius. In the other Flavian epics, dissension between parents and children can result in estrangement (mother and son in Statius' *Achilleid*), betrayal (father and daughter in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*), or, in the worst case, civil war (Oedipus' curse on his sons in Statius' *Thebaid*). The *Punica* presents a far more harmonious view of the aristocratic household. Fathers and sons disagree very rarely, always resolve their conflicts promptly in the father's favor, and never experience an ongoing state of estrangement. Though brief and infrequent, these

¹⁸ See Eidinow (2003) for a discussion of the obligations that Virgil's Ascanius imposes on Aeneas.

¹⁹ Hannibal's refusal to permit the Carthaginians to sacrifice his son for the state's benefit is a further example of his prioritization of family over state (*Pun.* 4.812–13).

²⁰ Quint (1989).

episodes of conflict nevertheless involve the epic's largest political and ethical concerns: how to balance competing obligations to family and state. Fabius' son criticizes his father's forgiveness of Minucius' insubordination (*Pun.* 7.536–66), while Pacuvius' son denounces his father's treacherous support for Carthage against Rome (*Pun.* 11.303–68). As a typical epic tyrant, Pacuvius subordinates all concern for virtue or fairness to a desire to seize and hold power by any means.²¹ Thus he simultaneously breaks the treaty that allies Capua to Rome and commands his son to abandon his patriotic plan of assassinating Hannibal. Fabius' resolution of conflict with his son presents an example of the virtuous exercise of paternal and political authority. When each of these fathers endeavors to justify his exercise of *patria potestas* over his son and *imperium* over his followers (*Pun.* 7.544), he indicates a divergent prioritization of political and familial obligations.

The narrator compares Fabius' concern for his soldiers' safety to that of a loving father for his sons: "There was no one keener to protect his own body or a beloved son" (*nec membris quisquam natouē pepercit amato/acrius*, *Pun.* 6.623–24). Yet his decisions bitterly provoke his soldiers, who complain that the cautious, Fabian strategy of delay and entrapment leaves them unable to drive the Carthaginian invaders from their homeland and avenge their fallen comrades. The requirement to fulfill a familial obligation provokes the occasion of Fabius' temporary loss of political authority. After Fabius' departure from the campaign to attend to the religious affairs of his *gens*, the senate promotes his *magister equitum* Minucius to equal status with the Dictator (*Pun.* 7.515–16). The relationship between Roman superiors and subordinates is typically figured as a paternal one.²² Cicero describes a praetor as the metaphorical father of a quaestor (*Div. Caec.* 61), and military commanders are often referred to as the "fathers" of their troops (Liv. 2.60.3, Tac. *Ann.* 2.55.4). As a military subordinate, Minucius is a figurative son of Fabius, and his promotion by the Senate therefore represents a challenge to Fabius' paternal authority.

Minucius immediately sends his soldiers into a losing battle, while Fabius continues to pursue his familiar strategy of holding back the troops remaining under his command. Fabius' son argues that his father should allow Hannibal's forces to destroy those of Minucius in

²¹ See Braund (1996).

²² Stevenson (2000) 27.

order to punish the Senate for its insulting decision (*Pun.* 7.539–46).²³ At this moment, then, Fabius confronts a simultaneous challenge to his authority from Minucius, his figurative son, and the younger Fabius, his actual son.²⁴ In his response to his son, Fabius appeals to the example of Camillus (*Pun.* 7.557–63), one which illustrates the collective wisdom of the ancestors (*sic docuere senes*, *Pun.* 7.557). His choice of example recalls the gravity of the conflict in which they are involved: the survival of the Roman state is once more at issue, as it was during Camillus' struggle against the Gauls (*Pun.* 1.7–8 ~ 7.562–63). Like Camillus, Fabius places submission to legal authority above potentially destructive concern for his own honor.²⁵ The threat of losing his fellow soldiers because of his own inaction outweighs all personal concerns (*Pun.* 7.549–57). Fabius justifies his exercise of paternal and political authority through reference to the interests of the wider community rather than the individual family, and through an evocation of Roman tradition rather than a blunt paternal directive.

Both Fabius' temporary departure from the battlefield and the reconfirmation of his authority as a *paterfamilias* and as the father of his army suggest potential incompatibilities between his political and familial identities. As mentioned above, Fabius' obligations to his kinsmen as the head of his *gens* precipitate the conflict with his public duties as Dictator. He can only keep the army unified and ready to implement his delaying strategy through his physical presence, again figured as paternal. After their unexpected victory, Fabius' troops "loudly celebrated him as their father" (*magna memorabant uoce parentem*, *Pun.* 7.735), while Minucius addresses him as *sancte...genitor* ("sacred father," *Pun.* 7.737) as he apologizes for his earlier insubordination. Fabius is no longer simply a father figure in his role as the leader of his troops but also as the restorer of their lives. Defining authority as paternal causes it to appear natural, all-encompassing, and immutable, rather than temporally limited and revocable. Fabius' appeals to the Republican ideals of collective action and subordination to the legal authority of the Senate are correspondingly undermined. His authority ultimately stems not from legal sanction but from his charismatic role as the father of the army. Fabius' use of the Camillus *exemplum*

²³ Nicol (1936) 40.

²⁴ Kißel (1979) 118–20; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2523–31; Delarue (1992) 160–63; also Fucecchi in this volume (221–30).

²⁵ Tipping (1999) 170–80.

also associates him with Scipio, who also plays the role (despite his youth) of father to his soldiers and enjoys comparison to Camillus in the epic's final lines (*Pun.* 17.652).²⁶ Unlike Scipio, however, Fabius cannot retain loyalty in absentia from his subordinates; he is a primarily defensive commander rather than a triumphant conqueror; and his line of descent from the god Hercules is distant. Scipio, by contrast, is directly descended from Jupiter. He avoids conflict with his troops by giving them the successful conquests they desire. These aspects of his identity are a far closer approximation of the ideal emperor who combines divine descent with familial and political authority.²⁷

Pacuvius. Is a son justified in disobeying his father's orders if they are morally unacceptable? According to Aulus Gellius, such questions were typical subjects of contemporary philosophical debate: "it is commonly inquired in philosophers' discussions whether a father ought to be obeyed at all times and in every command" (*quaeri solitum est in philosophorum disceptationibus, an semper inque omnibus iussis patri parendum sit*, Gel. 2.7.1).²⁸ Acquiescence to paternal demands is not an absolute imperative: rather, each case must be judged on its own merit. In choosing to break the treaty with Rome, Pacuvius undermines the identifications between virtue, ideal governance, and paternal authority made by the epic's other fathers. His lack of moral justification reveals the contingency of his exercise of paternal authority. In place of Fabius' virtuous use of his leaderly authority, justified by its own beneficent outcome as well as through his appeal of the traditional example of Camillus, Pacuvius lays claim to a 'natural' paternal authority through which he attempts to overrule cogent moral objections. His supplication of his son and appeal to his pity further contradict the stereotypical image of the authoritative father. Where Fabius subordinates his personal concerns to the needs of his soldiers, Pacuvius aims at the acquisition of tyrannical power and causes the downfall of his city. This brief episode once again locates the overlap of paternal and political authority within a father-son dyad.²⁹

²⁶ KiBel (1979) 128 observes that Marcellus represents a transitional figure between the defensive Fabius and the aggressive Scipio.

²⁷ Marks (2005a) 209–44.

²⁸ For versions of the question in rhetorical contexts, see also, e.g., Quint. *Decl.* 271.1.

²⁹ Burck (1984b) 18–21 and most recently Bettenworth (2004) 375–93.

In his father's household, Pacuvius' son is the *mens una* ("one mind," *Pun.* 11.307) that resists the Carthaginians. He rebukes his father for allying with the Carthaginians and announces his plan to assassinate Hannibal. Pacuvius answers his son's political appeal to the treaties with the Romans "polluted" by his treachery (*polluta...foedera*, *Pun.* 11.321) with personal concerns for the *polluta hospitia* (11.335) of their household should his son proceed with his plan of assassinating Hannibal. In Pacuvius' mind, such a violation of hospitality, though it would reflect negatively only upon the reputation of a single family (and would likely be immediately forgiven by overjoyed Romans), would be more significant than the breaking of a treaty which threatens the entire city's future. Although Pacuvius' son abandons the assassination plan in response to his father's demand, Hannibal and his troops nevertheless pollute the entire city through their occupation (*Pun.* 13.304–5). As often in Greco-Roman political discourse, a single household serves as a model of the state, and corruption within it ultimately extends to affect the entire community. As he alternately demands and begs for his son's obedience, Pacuvius attempts to interpose himself as a sacrificial substitute for Hannibal. He insists that his son must kill him first before he can kill his guest (*Pun.* 11.353–60).³⁰ By granting his son the power of life and death, traditionally imagined to be part of the Roman father's right of *patria potestas*, Pacuvius reverses the typical relationship of authority between father and son. Methods of persuasion typically marked as 'feminine,' such as begging, weeping, and offering his own life, complement Pacuvius' resignation of other aspects of the paternal role.³¹ Pacuvius simultaneously abandons his paternal authority to his son and his city's political authority to the Carthaginians.

Virgil's Mezentius and Lausus provide the Augustan model for these figures of the tyrant and his virtuous son. Contemporary examples from the other Flavian epics include Valerius' Pelias and Acastus and Statius' Creon and Menoeceus.³² The acquiescence of Pacuvius' son

³⁰ As Bettenworth (2004) 390 observes, this episode's promotion of *pietas* to parents over the rights of guests is unique in epic.

³¹ For a similar attempt by a parent to block a child from violence by interposing her own life, compare Jocasta's insistence that her son Eteocles must drive his chariot over her body before he can proceed to the unlawful combat with his brother (*Theb.* 11.341–42).

³² Bettenworth (2004) 376–77. Also compare Silius' Hampsagoras and Hostus (*Pun.* 12.346–47).

to his father's immoral demands contrasts with the disobedient but virtuous pursuit of *gloria* undertaken by Valerius' Acastus and Statius' Menoeceus. Like their counterparts in the Roman declamatory tradition,³³ tyrants in these epics exemplify the negative consequences of excessive power. The virtuous *princeps* is implicitly adjured to refrain from their example. As a father who restrains his son from the pursuit of virtue and glory, Pacuvius presents a similarly cautionary example to the fathers of the contemporary Roman upper class. The expanded social mobility of the first century AD increased the likelihood that sons would transcend the status of their fathers.³⁴ Flavian epic represents the father's 'unnatural' restraint of his son from the pursuit of virtue or glory as tyrannical and immoral.

Scipio. Unlike semi-divine heroes such as Achilles or Aeneas, Silius' Scipio remains unaware of his true paternity throughout the epic's first two hexads. He only learns of his descent from Jupiter when he encounters his dead mother during his descent to the underworld (*Pun.* 13.634–47).³⁵ Knowledge of this aspect of his identity remains concealed from most characters throughout the epic. Unlike Hannibal, who inherits madness from his father and whose war of vengeance in his name leads to Carthage's defeat, Scipio successfully balances personal and political obligations. Victory in the Spanish campaign completes the vengeance for his father and uncle, as the Sibyl informs him (*Pun.* 13.507). The rest of Scipio's illustrious career will be dedicated to serving the state whose fate depends on his (*Pun.* 13.499–505). The narrator refers to him as *ultor patriae domusque* ("avenger of his fatherland and of his kinsmen," *Pun.* 16.593), a phrase whose symmetry suggests that obligations in these two spheres will not cause conflict for Scipio as they have for the other leaders examined above.

Other sons of Jupiter, such as Alexander, Hercules, Bacchus, the Dioscuri, and Quirinus, provide instructive models for Scipio as he progresses from epigone to mature leader.³⁶ Though Scipio's human father urges caution to his son (*Pun.* 13.669–70), Alexander encourages him to pursue the victorious destiny predicted by his divine father

³³ See Tabacco (1985).

³⁴ In general, see Hopkins (1983) 149–93. The careers of the Annaei and the Flavians during this period provide extraordinary examples of social mobility; on the former, see Gualandri and Mazzoli (2003).

³⁵ On this scene, see Augoustakis (2008) 66–70.

³⁶ Virtus celebrates the latter group in her speech (*Pun.* 15.77–83).

Jupiter (*Pun.* 13.762–75).³⁷ Scipio demonstrates his obedience both to his divine father and to the Roman state by “placing the proud laurel in the lap of Jupiter” at his triumph (as predicted by Virtus, *Pun.* 15.119–20). Where Hannibal is an anti-Aeneas, travelling to Italy for the purpose of destroying Rome, Scipio undertakes several of Aeneas’ characteristic demonstrations of filial *pietas*, such as the rescue of his father, the *katabasis*, and the funeral games.³⁸ Yet Scipio possesses only the *pietas* toward parents that Cicero classes below *pietas* toward the state, and Ripoll has accordingly identified him as the hero of *uir-tus* rather than Virgilian *pietas*.³⁹ His encounter with his presumptive human father in the underworld results only in a brief account of the latter’s death in battle (*Pun.* 13.663–86) rather than the vision of the Roman future offered by Virgil’s Anchises. Unlike the historical panoramas on the shields of Hannibal and Aeneas, Scipio’s shield contains only the images of his father and uncle (17.396–98). Scipio’s role has been limited to the conqueror of Hannibal rather than founder of a new civilization.

By concealing the truth of Scipio’s paternity from most other characters of the epic, the narrative enables an indirect revelation of their morality and awareness of fate.⁴⁰ Virtus and Voluptas make contrasting assumptions about his paternity during their respective efforts to persuade him to choose their modes of life. The narrative frame of the episode already assimilates Scipio to Jupiter’s son Hercules, who was similarly confronted with the choice between Ἀρετή and Κακία at the crossroads (*Xen. Mem.* 2.1.21–33).⁴¹ While Voluptas claims that Scipio remains subject to mortal limitations (*Pun.* 15.33–67), Virtus argues that “the gate of heaven lies open” for Scipio because he is “one of those for whom origin from heavenly seed is preserved” (*at quis aetherii seruatur seminis ortus/caeli porta patet*, *Pun.* 15.77–78). In her prediction of his triumph (discussed immediately above), she describes his placement

³⁷ Fucecchi (1993) 39–42; Marks (2005a) 142–47; see also Tipping in this volume (205–8).

³⁸ *Pun.* 4.466–71 ~ *Aen.* 2.707–23; *Pun.* 13.650–704 ~ *Aen.* 6.679–892; *Pun.* 16.275–591 ~ *Aen.* 5.42–603. On the games, see Lovatt in this volume (155–76).

³⁹ Ripoll (1998a) 282–85.

⁴⁰ Contrast the approach of Marks (2005a) 187–94, who characterizes Silius’ references to Scipio’s paternity as “mixed signals” reflecting the contradictions of the received tradition.

⁴¹ Ripoll (1998a) 251–53, 367–69; Marks (2005a) 148–61; see also Asso in this volume (189–90).

of the laurel in Jupiter's temple as an act of filial *pietas* for his divine father as well as the fulfillment of his obligation to the Roman state.

Human characters similarly maintain contrasting perceptions of Scipio's paternity. Two African rulers offer hospitality to Scipio in *Punica* 16: Masinissa greets Scipio as *nate Tonatis* ("son of Jupiter," *Pun.* 16.144), while Syphax observes that "your appearance recalls your father's" (*reuocat tua forma parentem*, *Pun.* 16.193). Masinissa's ability to perceive the truth of Scipio's divine paternity is consonant with his *fides* and *uirtus*, the central values of the *Punica*, while Syphax's mistake is a prefiguration of his incorrect assumption that his treachery will be profitable.⁴² While there is no imputation to Fabius of the immorality of Voluptas or Syphax, his debate with Scipio in the Senate over the invasion of Africa (*Pun.* 16.592–700) similarly involves a misperception of Scipio's paternity.⁴³ Fabius employs the example of Scipio's human father as part of an argument for caution (*Pun.* 16.632–36), while Scipio contradicts him on the basis of his knowledge of divine will received from Jupiter (*Pun.* 16.664–65).⁴⁴ In the final lines of the epic (*Pun.* 17.645–54), the narrator underlines the importance of divine descent by comparing Scipio to other sons of Jupiter (Bacchus and Hercules) and appealing to his victory as the substantiating example of the truth of his divine paternity.

Scipio's divine descent, the repeated omens signifying his divine favor, and his successful campaigning all suggest the individual charismatic leadership associated with the ideal emperor. Particular aspects of the presentation of Scipio in the *Punica* appear intended to align him with the emperor Domitian. Immediately after Jupiter reveals that Scipio will drive Hannibal out of Italy (*Pun.* 3.590–92), he follows with an unironic panegyric of Domitian's activities as a conqueror (*Pun.* 3.607–29). Silius' contemporary Martial explicitly compares the emperor's cognomen *Germanicus* to Scipio's cognomen *Africanus* (Mart. 2.2). Both figures claimed to be undertaking the conquests that granted

⁴² Masinissa: Ripoll (2003) and Augoustakis (2008) 66–70; Syphax: Pomeroy (2000) 154–55. Cf. Ripoll (1998a) 285; Marks (2005a) 169–79.

⁴³ KiBel (1979) 143–36; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2554–57; Marks (2005a) 50–55 and 101–10.

⁴⁴ Hannibal and Fabius are only descended very distantly from the gods and thus have no access to superior knowledge of their destinies. The gods in fact deliberately deceive Hannibal at multiple points in the *Punica*, including 1.123–39, 3.163–221, and 17.558–59.

these cognomina on behalf of Jupiter.⁴⁵ Scipio does not learn of his divine parentage until after the death of his father; Domitian similarly acquired his divine parentage retroactively after the death and apotheosis of his father Vespasian. Scipio's emphasis on *uirtus* and *fides* over *pietas* also reflects Domitian's communication through coin types. The emperor stopped producing *Pietas* types soon after the beginning of his reign and began to issue *Fides Publica* types in AD 84; he would issue these types more frequently than Vespasian.⁴⁶

These monarchical aspects of Scipio's identity have indeed seemed to many readers of the *Punica* quite incompatible with his putative identity as a Republican general.⁴⁷ As discussed above, Fabius appears to exemplify the Republican ideal of collective action by yielding to the directives of the Senate (even to his own temporary disadvantage)—yet he too finds that his soldiers nevertheless attribute charismatic paternal leadership to him. Previous accounts of Fabius, Scipio, and Camillus could emphasize their refusal to assume monarchical power. Valerius Maximus represents these figures as examples of *moderatio* (4.1.2, 5–6), while Seneca describes Scipio's withdrawal from Rome as a resolution of his conflict with the Senate in favor of *libertas* (*Ep.* 86.1). In the *Punica*, however, representing a leader's political authority as paternal, natural, and benevolent enables him to supersede constitutional limitations and yet avoid the negative stereotypes of tyranny.

2. *Syngeneia and the state*

The *Punica* employs the conceptual paradigm of familial descent in order to characterize relationships between states and between ethnic groups.⁴⁸ For example, the epic narrates the fulfillment of two

⁴⁵ BMC 2.381–82 no. 381. See Fears (1977) 136; Laudizi (1989) 45–46; Marks (2005a) 218–44.

⁴⁶ Domitian accepted the ten-year consulship in 84; he would assume a perpetual censorship in the following year. See Mezzanotte (1995) 363–65; Susplugas (2003) 93.

⁴⁷ Bassett (1966); Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2542–55; Fucecchi (1993); Marks (2005a). In the present volume, Tipping examines Scipio both as a proto-*princeps* and as an exemplar of Roman autocracy. He identifies Scipio's Herculean gigantomachy as a prelude to autocracy, and also raises the issue of Jupiter's role and reliability in the *Punica* (193–218). *Contra* see Marks in this volume (152–53).

⁴⁸ As Walzer (1983) 41 observes, “states are like families rather than clubs, for it is a feature of families that their members are morally connected to people they have not chosen.”

prophecies from Virgil's *Aeneid* that concern the identity of the Roman people and their relationship with other states. Silius' Roman people are indeed the mixed descendants of Trojan fathers and Latin mothers that Virgil's Jupiter promised they would become (*Aen.* 12.834–40), while the Carthaginians' enmity toward them results from Dido's dying curse setting her descendants at war with the descendants of Aeneas (*Aen.* 4.625–29). The appeal to shared descent from common founders (*syngeneia*) can function as the basis for collective action in the *Aeneid*, as when, for example, Aeneas requests assistance from Evander based on their shared descent from Atlas through the god's daughters Maia and Electra (*Aen.* 8.126–51). While *syngeneia* creates unity between groups in the *Punica*, the epic also indicates its limitations in episodes such as the Romans' refusal of military assistance to the Saguntines (*Pun.* 1.672–94) or the Capuan revolt against Rome (*Pun.* 11.122–224). While the *Punica* also presents a (historically inaccurate) vision of the entire Italian peninsula united against Hannibal at the battle of Cannae, the Saguntum and Capua episodes suggest that the myth of *syngeneia* cannot in fact guarantee unity.

Saguntum. Like Virgil's Lavinium, Saguntum was founded by a migrant descendant of the Trojan royal family, Zacynthos the son of Dardanus, and like Virgil's Roman people, the Saguntines are also a *genus mixtum* who have grown through migration and intermarriage. Two sets of migrants, an earlier group from the Greek island of Zacynthos and a subsequent one from the Rutulian city of Ardea (*Pun.* 1.273–93), are the ancestors of the present population.⁴⁹ Though this version of the city's foundation is well-attested in other ancient literary sources,⁵⁰ it likely has no historical basis. Mythical migration narratives often reflect the attempt by an ethnic group to assert dominance within a region rather than a record of an actual historical migration.⁵¹ The *Aeneid*'s account of Roman ethnic origins privileges the Trojan component within the Roman hybrid. Within the Saguntine *genus mixtum*, Rutulian identity takes primacy over Zacynthian or Greek. The narrator's description of Murrus, the first Saguntine to be encountered as an individual character, programmatically suggests the primacy of the

⁴⁹ Asso (2003) 231 and in this volume (180–89).

⁵⁰ Cf. Liv. 21.7.2–3, Plin. *Nat.* 16.216, Str. 3.4.6. Other hybrid ethnic groups in the *Punica* include the Sardinians (12.355–69) and the Etruscans (4.719–21).

⁵¹ Hall (1997) 34–66.

Rutulian component of the hybrid Saguntine identity:⁵² *Rutulus Murrus de sanguine (at idem/matre Saguntina Graius geminoque parente/Dulichios Italīs miscebat prole nepotes)* (“Murrus was of Rutulian blood—but the same man was also Greek, because he was born from a Saguntine mother, and in his descent from his two parents he mixed Dulichian descent with Italian,” *Pun.* 1.377–79).

This privileging of Rutulian identity in the introduction of the first individuated Saguntine character is also echoed at the conclusion of the Saguntum episode. Hannibal’s assault on the city ends with the mass suicide of the Saguntines. On their communal pyre, the Saguntines burn “weapons carried over from Dulichian Zacynthos by their forefathers, and household gods brought over from the ancient city of the Rutulians” (*armaque Dulichia proavis portata Zacyntho/et prisca aduectos Rutulorum ex urbe penates*, *Pun.* 2.603–4). While the double origins of these various objects recall the mixed ancestry of the Saguntines, the Rutulian *penates* are more significant to the establishment of their identities. The *Aeneid* emphasizes the centrality of these sacred objects to the Trojan migration, which even appear to Aeneas in a dream to guide him toward his fated destination (*Aen.* 3.147–71). *Penates* therefore embody the memory of the ancestral city more effectively than interchangeable *arma*. The loss of their *penates* underlines the cruelty of the Saguntines’ fate at Hannibal’s hands. There will be no possibility of a further migration to resettle them as in the *Aeneid*. The narrative thereby emphasizes the dominance of the Rutulian component of the Saguntines’ identities even at the moment of their obliteration.

These narratives of Saguntum’s foundation and destruction guide the reader to perceive the Saguntine *genus mixtum* as conceptually similar to Roman identity as described in the *Aeneid*. Both epics present one ethnic group as dominant within a hybrid population: Rutulian in the case of Saguntum, Trojan in the case of Rome. Yet these claims of ethnic affiliation are not immutable, objective facts but can be varied to suit the rhetorical needs of the speaker who employs them. The requirement to define ethnic identity rarely occurs in interactions among members of the same ethnic group. Rhetorical assertions of ethnic identity and affiliation are more typically elicited during encounters with people of different ethnicity.⁵³ As Hannibal begins his assault on

⁵² Küppers (1986) 131–33.

⁵³ Smith (1987) 109–19.

the city, the Saguntine ambassador Sicoris travels to Rome to request military assistance from the Senate. He fails in his attempt, however, to obligate the Romans through appeals to their shared descent (*Pun.* 1.634–71). Sicoris' appeal to the Romans evokes a lengthy tradition of kinship diplomacy well attested in prior epic and historiographical sources. The example of Aeneas' appeal to Evander (*Aen.* 8.126–51) has already been briefly mentioned above. Both Romans and the states subject to them made similar appeals to shared Trojan ancestry as the grounds for diplomatic alliance beginning from the early third century BC.⁵⁴ Even Rome's enemies could use the fact of Trojan ancestry in order to unite against the Romans. The famously ambiguous oracle given to Pyrrhus of Epirus in Ennius' *Annales*, for example, addresses the king as "descendant of Achilles" (*Aeacida*, 167 Skutsch). His war against the Romans is figured as an effort by one of Achilles' descendants to defeat the descendants of the Trojans.⁵⁵ The claims to ethnic identity made in Roman epic are typically "primordialist" (in Smith's terminology),⁵⁶ in that they assert unbroken continuity between the origins of an ethnic group and that group's identity in the contemporary world.

Despite the length of time that has elapsed since the Rutulian migration to Spain, both Sicoris and the narrator still perceive a relationship of kinship between the populations of Rome and Saguntum. The narrator describes Sicoris' arrival as an entry into the "walls of kindred Rome" (*consanguineae...moenia Romae*, *Pun.* 1.608), and the ambassador asks the Romans to "extend a kindred hand" (*consanguineam...dextram*, *Pun.* 1.655). Sicoris reminds the Romans that they have previously intervened in the affairs of other states that share common descent from Trojan ancestors (*Pun.* 1.662–65). Sicoris concludes his appeal by amplifying the claim of consanguinity into one of consubstantiality (*Pun.* 1.670–71): despite the considerable distance between Rome and Saguntum, they are nevertheless a shared body politic. A similar moral vision complements the claim of affiliation through shared ethnicity: both Saguntines and Romans are described as people of *fides* opposed to the perfidious Carthaginians (*Pun.* 1.329–33, 1.634).⁵⁷ That the Romans refuse Sicoris' plea does not therefore suggest that kin-

⁵⁴ Jones (1999) 81–93, 106–21; Momigliano (1984).

⁵⁵ Jones (1999) 46–48; Erskine (2001) 157–61.

⁵⁶ Smith (1987) 174–208.

⁵⁷ von Albrecht (1964) 55–86; Burck (1988).

ship diplomacy in itself is an insufficient mandate for collective action. Rather, the *Punica* thereby suggests that the Romans have failed to maintain *fides*.⁵⁸

There is a gap of several centuries between the mythical foundation of Saguntum and the occasion of Sicoris' plea to the Roman Senate, yet the ambassador claims that the Saguntines can trace their origins directly back to their Rutulian ancestors. The intervening history between the city's foundation and the present day has apparently had no effect on Saguntine self-perception. As Dominik has demonstrated, similar examples of the "telescoping" of history occur throughout the *Punica*.⁵⁹ Such "telescoping" lends particular rhetorical strength to the primordialist claim to ethnic affiliation: it encourages inattention to the inconvenient facts of intervening history that might suggest a more varied composition of the population. The inherent implausibility of primordialist claims does not present a problem in the Sicoris episode (as it does, for example, in the rather different context of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 15).⁶⁰ Rather, Sicoris offers a distorted picture of the actual relationship between his Rutulian ancestors, the Romans, and their allies.

The ambassador describes his fellow Saguntines as descended from Rutulians "forced" (*coacti*, *Pun.* 1.660) to leave Ardea, and the Rutulian city is described elsewhere in the *Punica* as "once hostile to the Trojans" (*Phrygibus grauis*, *Pun.* 8.359). Sicoris engages in an extreme telescoping of history in recalling this event. He speaks in the voice of one of the participants in the original Rutulian migration from Ardea: "When too prosperous Ardea sent forth its young men, I brought Laurentian names beyond the Pyrenees, bringing the sacred objects and the house and the innermost sanctuary of my ancestor Turnus" (*cum felix nimium dimitteret Ardea pubem, / sacra domumque ferens et aui penetralia Turni / ultra Pyrenen Laurentia nomina duxi*, *Pun.* 1.667–69). Sicoris' prosopopoeia of a Rutulian *penatiger* in the image of Aeneas suggests a similarity between the fall of Ardea and the fall of Troy. The description of the city as *felix nimium* (*Pun.* 1.667), meanwhile, echoes Dido's dying words (*Aen.* 4.657) and thus evokes the fall of Carthage. These recollections of three fallen cities undermine Sicoris' claims for positive relations

⁵⁸ Dominik (2006).

⁵⁹ Dominik (2003).

⁶⁰ Hardie (1997b).

between Saguntines and Romans. The Rutulian migrants likely had no sympathy for the Trojans who sacked their city. Their descendants could only be well-disposed toward the Romans if the assimilation and reconciliation between Rutulians and Trojans predicted in the Virgilian Jupiter's prophecy had been fully achieved (*Aen.* 12.834–40), and Sicoris' nostalgia for the ancestral city of Ardea suggests that this is not the case among the Rutulian descendants currently resident in Saguntum. His primordialist narrative of *syngeneia* implies ongoing hostility between the two populations, not a sense of friendship or obligation.

A further difficulty in Sicoris' appeal to *syngeneia* rests in his assumption that Rutulian descent is considered as significant as Trojan descent within the Roman *genus mixtum*. For Sicoris' claim that Saguntum and Rome enjoy a relationship of *consanguinitas* to be valid, both cities would have to be perceived as 'Rutulian'. Rome is characteristically viewed as a Trojan city, however, throughout the rest of the *Punica*.⁶¹ In Hannibal's view, furthermore, there is no relationship of *syngeneia* between Saguntum and Rome at all. The city may have been named from Zacynthos, but Hercules built its walls, and the god who once sacked Troy remains (in Hannibal's hopeful view) unsympathetic to Trojan descendants.⁶² Therefore Hannibal claims that the Roman military intervention would be a defense of *externos...penates* (*Pun.* 2.32), not ones linked through a strong bond of kinship.

The ambassador's appeal continues with examples of successful 'recent' (from the characters' perspective)⁶³ appeals to *syngeneia* with the Romans that elicited the desired military intervention (*Pun.* 1.662–65). The Romans had in fact come earlier to the defense of Messana and Capua, cities perceived as affiliated with them through shared descent. The Mamertines appealed to Rome in 264 BC to defend them against Hiero II of Syracuse, and according to Polybius made a claim of *homophylia* to their protectors. What Sicoris' brief allusion to this event leaves unstated, however, is the Senate's apprehension regarding the Mamertines' treacherous capture of Messina. Pragmatic considerations rather than concern for *syngeneia* alone were

⁶¹ *Daunius* and *Rutulus* as synonyms of *Romanus* only appear 23 times in the *Punica*, while Trojan ethnonyms (*Aeneadae*, *Dardanius*, *Iliacus*, etc.) occur far more frequently. See Spaltenstein (1986) 208.

⁶² See Asso (2003).

⁶³ See Fucecchi (2003) for discussion of the events of the 'recent' past, from the point of view of the characters.

the actual motives for the invasion. The Romans intended to enrich themselves through plunder and to halt the expansion of Carthaginian power in Sicily (Plb. 1.10–11).⁶⁴ Sicoris' second example of a Roman response to an appeal to *syngeneia*, their defense of Capua against the Samnites, initially appears to be a more convincing precedent. Yet the *Punica* proceeds to undermine the force of this example by relating Capua's indifference to *syngeneia* when it revolts against Rome during Hannibal's invasion of Italy. Both examples in fact show that *syngeneia* is not as a compelling force for the pragmatic Romans as the desperate Saguntines would like it to be. As the Capua episode of the *Punica* demonstrates, the moral obligations implicit in the relationship of *syngeneia* are in fact frequently subordinated to expedient considerations.

Capua. The shifting of Capuan loyalties from the Romans to Hannibal occurs amid a number of other revolts among various Italian and Celtic peoples in response to Hannibal's invasion of Italy (*Pun.* 11.1–27). While the narrator regards these other acts of disloyalty as evidence of the weakness of *fides* and its subjugation to “tottering *fortuna*” (*Pun.* 11.3–4), the treachery of a city that shares common Trojan descent with Rome is a particularly repugnant offense against *Fides*. He questions: “Who would believe that walls of Trojan origin would be allied with the barbarous tyrant of the Numidians?” (*Dardana ab ortu/moenia barbarico Nomadum sociata tyranno/quisnam... credat*, *Pun.* 11.30–32).⁶⁵ The narrator's indignation is echoed by Decius Magius, the leader of the Capuan loyalist faction (*Pun.* 11.157–90). For Decius, shared descent is an essential reason for Capua to stand by Rome in its hour of need (*Pun.* 11.177–79), while the prospect of including the Carthaginian invaders in the future descent of the Capuan people prompts him to vent racist hysteria (*Pun.* 11.180–82). Instead of the positive view of hybridity maintained by the Saguntines, Decius insists the purity of Trojan blood must be preserved against “mixture” (*ille ego... mixtus*) with African *semihomines* (*Pun.* 11.180–82). As a typical primordialist, Decius chooses to ignore the fact that Trojan blood is not itself pure but part of a *genus mixtum*. His vision of the Roman community is far from the vision presented on the shield of Aeneas, in which ethnic

⁶⁴ Walbank (1957–79) 1:57–58.

⁶⁵ For varied traditions regarding Capua's ethnic composition and its founder's identity, see Heurgon (1970) 136–53; Brugnoli (1992).

particularities will eventually be subsumed through the universal extension of Roman empire (*Aen.* 8.720–28).⁶⁶

Concern for *syngeneia* is understandably a low priority when the Romans initially reconquer Capua.⁶⁷ In their rage to punish their former allies' treachery (described as a form of *furor*; *Pun.* 13.209, 216–17), they are about to raze the city's temples and execute its civilians. Only the intervention of the god Pan prevents a massacre and causes them to recall their kinship with the Capuans.⁶⁸ Silius establishes a contrast with the restrained conduct of Marcellus' soldiers upon their capture of Syracuse, a city without links of shared descent.⁶⁹ The *furor* of the Roman soldiers in Capua recalls the madness of Caesar's soldiers in Lucan's *De bello ciuili*, who similarly swear to kill their families and destroy temples (*Luc.* 1.8, 1.374–82). Their behavior in Capua is one of the many prefigurations of the future civil wars in the *Punica*.⁷⁰ Capua in particular had a history of choosing the losing side: it supported Vitellius against the Flavians in the war of AD 69 (*Tac. Hist.* 3.57). In the *Punica*, the myth of common origin cannot ensure political loyalty on either Capuan or Roman sides.

The disdain for *syngeneia* that results in violent conflict at Capua dissolves the optimistic vision established in the earlier Cannae episode of an Italian peninsula unified against Hannibal. Silius' ahistorical catalogue of Roman forces (*Pun.* 8.356–616) includes groups that did not actually participate in the battle (such as the Praenestines, *Pun.* 8.365), as well as those who were in fact opposed to the Romans (such as the Ligurians, *Pun.* 8.605).⁷¹ The *Punica* further claims that these participants on the Roman side were not only unified but equal, a fantasy that overlooks the social, political, and juridical inequality between Roman *ciues* and Latin *socii* and *foederati* throughout the third century BC and long after. The anachronistic vision of the unified peninsula looks toward Flavian efforts to restore peace after the war of AD 69 rather than to the historical battle of Cannae.⁷² Yet the Capua episode

⁶⁶ Toll (1997) 45–50; Adler (2003) 193–216.

⁶⁷ Bernstein (forthcoming).

⁶⁸ According to Livy (26.15–16, 33), the Romans executed the city's nobility, removed its power of self-governance, and enslaved the citizen population.

⁶⁹ Marks (2005a) 259–63; see also Fucecchi in this volume (230–38) for discussion of Marcellus.

⁷⁰ McGuire (1995).

⁷¹ Venini (1978) 126–34.

⁷² Mezzanotte (1995) 370–72; Levick (1999) 124–34.

of the *Punica* that follows soon after recalls for Silius' contemporaries that unity in Italy remains unstable even into their day and that political relationships based solely on shared descent will likely be fragile. Through its Saguntum and Capua episodes, Silius' *Punica* questions the ability of myths of common descent to serve as the charter uniting diverse ethnic communities.

D. Reception and Criticism

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

SILIUS ITALICUS IN THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

Frances Muecke*

These days we frequently read Silius Italicus because we enjoyed Silius in our youth, and now that we are engaged in wars we like him still better, for he sings of wars.¹

(Letter from King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary to Pomponio Leto in Rome [1471])

The fifteenth century was Silius Italicus' century of greatest popularity.² All his extant manuscripts date from the fifteenth century, a period which also produced seven certain editions.³ Rediscovered by Poggio Bracciolini at the time of the Council of Constance in 1417,⁴ the *Punica* began to circulate beyond a restricted group of people only in the 1450s.⁵ From the early 1450s there is evidence for lecture courses, both in Florence and Rome.⁶ Rome became a dominant hub in the transmission in the late 1460s. The first two printed editions came out in Rome in 1471. The anonymous editor of Parma 1481 must, I think, have studied at Rome.⁷ Certainly Pietro Marso, author of the first printed commentary (Venice 1483, 1492, and 1493), did.⁸

* I would like to thank Em. Prof. Julia Gaisser for her comments on a draft of this chapter.

¹ Csapodi and Csapodi-Gárdonyi (1981) 11 (referring to Teleki [1855] 454–55). See Zabughin (1921–23) 2:302 on the appeal of the *Aeneid*'s "elemento guerresco" to Renaissance readers.

² Followed by the eighteenth, see Bassett (1953); cf. Schama (1995) 458–59 on Thomas Gray's reading of Silius Italicus. See von Albrecht (1964) 9–14 on the poet's reputation through the ages.

³ See *CTC* 351, 364–65 and Delz (1987) *Praefatio* (hereafter cited as Delz). Both are invaluable sources of information without which this chapter could not have been written. See also Reeve (1983).

⁴ For a brief summary, see *CTC* 349 and Delz vi–ix.

⁵ Reeve (1977) 224; see Rizzo (1995) 380–96 on the late diffusion of texts discovered by Poggio.

⁶ *CTC* 365–87.

⁷ His text contains emendations he could only have obtained from Domizio Calderini's lectures; see Muecke (2005).

⁸ Dykmans (1988) 8 and 10.

That is the bare bones of the transmission—from oblivion to status as a standard author in sixty six years. This trajectory is astounding but not atypical.⁹ Parallel cases include Lucretius and Statius' *Silvae*, for instance. Silius Italicus was one of the objects of the “gold rush,” the study of Classical texts in the mid to late fifteenth century, the competitive scramble to acquire, publish, and expound.¹⁰ In this chapter, I shall consider the appeal of the *Punica* to its first readers and interpreters and the contexts in which the poem was read and elucidated. In the foreground, I shall place some emblematic moments in the reception of the *Punica*.

1. *Before Silius*

The reception of Silius is inevitably intertwined with that of the historiography of the Punic wars, and therefore with knowledge of the texts of Livy¹¹ and Polybius.¹² Two works that set the scene for Silius were Petrarch's Latin epic on the Second Punic War, the *Africa*, and Leonardo Bruni's *Commentaria primi belli Punici* (or *De primo bello Punico*). Petrarch's *Africa*, written in ignorance of Silius' *Punica*, was left unfinished and, to the consternation of his friends, did not circulate in full during the poet's lifetime.¹³ In his treatment of the *fortuna* of Petrarch's epic, Bernardo passes directly from Pier Paolo Vergerio's edition of 1397 to the *editio princeps* of 1501.¹⁴ This, however, overlooks, at least, the criticism of Petrarch's poem put into the acerbic mouth of Niccolò Niccoli in Leonardo Bruni's dialogues on contemporary culture (1402–3):

Atqui nihil unquam tanta professione praedicatum est, quanta Franciscus Petrarcha *Africam* suam praedicavit... Quid autem postea? Ex tanta professione nonne natus est ridiculus mus? (*Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histum* 1.48)¹⁵

⁹ Rizzo (1995) gives an important analysis of constant features of the transmission of texts in Italy in the early to mid-fifteenth century.

¹⁰ So described by Campanelli (2001) ix; see also Kenney (1974).

¹¹ A. H. McDonald (1971) 331–48.

¹² Momigliano (1977) 79–98; Pace (1988).

¹³ Bernardo (1962) 172–75.

¹⁴ Bernardo (1962) 175–76. The *Africa* was first published in Petrarch's *Opera latina* in Venice in 1501.

¹⁵ Text comes from Baldassari (1994) 257; translation is my own here and elsewhere, unless otherwise indicated.

Yet nothing was ever heralded with such a deal of assertion as that with which Francesco Petrarca heralded his *Africa*... But what came after? Did not such a deal of assertion give birth to a laughable mouse?

Nevertheless the *Africa* attests to the great interest in Scipio already existing in the fourteenth century.¹⁶ It can be concluded that “[t]he authority and popularity of Petrarch, the biography of Scipio that he wrote, and what was known about the *Africa*... will go far to explain the popularity of Silius after his text was found again.”¹⁷

Bruni's *De primo bello Punico* (dated ca. 1419–22) coincided with the rediscovery of the *Punica*. Leonardo Bruni was one of the most important of the first generation of humanist translators of Greek.¹⁸ As modern scholarship has begun to stress, however, Bruni's history of the First Punic War was not just a translation: it drew on Thucydides, Strabo, Plutarch, Florus (and other Latin sources);¹⁹ but most importantly it made the first two books of Polybius, its prime exhibit, available to the Greekless, until Perotti's translation of books 1–5 was produced for Nicholas V in the middle of the fifteenth century. The work's use of Polybius, not known in the West before, to fill the gap of the missing second decade of Livy, must go some way to accounting for its colossal success.²⁰ The result is “that the story of the First Punic War was once again available to Western readers in something approaching Livian completeness.”²¹ Bruni did more than this, Ianziti argues: first he wanted “to provide his contemporaries with a history of the First Punic War that would speak to their immediate concerns,”²² and second, “Bruni relativized both Livy and Polybius when it came to writing his own account of the First Punic War.”²³ Both these points are important for our concerns, inasmuch as Bruni boosted the

¹⁶ Burckhardt (1995) 164: “...in Petrarch's time and afterwards Scipio was just as much an object of public interest as if he were then alive...” On the fifteenth century and beyond, see Bernardo (1962) 176–83.

¹⁷ *CTC* 349. On Petrarch and Silius, see von Albrecht (1964) 118–44; Martellotti (1981); Everson (2001) 58, 80–85 (on Livy), and 96–103 (on *Africa*).

¹⁸ Bodley (2004) 5–6 and 23–41; Hankins (2003) 18–19. I am indebted to Ianziti (2006) 173–97.

¹⁹ Reynolds (1954) 108–18; Ianziti (2006) 174 and *passim*.

²⁰ Ianziti (2006) 173–74 based on Hankins (1997) s.v. *index* and (2003) 189.

²¹ Ianziti (2006) 173.

²² Ianziti (2006) 175. In the preface of *History of the Florentine People*, Bruni compared Florence's victory over Pisa in 1406 with the Rome's victory over Carthage, claiming that the similarities spurred him to write his great work. See Hankins (2001) 3.

²³ Ianziti (2006) 195.

relevance of the history of the Punic Wars and at the same time provided a model for commentators who compared Livy and Polybius in their explications of Silius. In fact, one of the earliest surviving commentators, known as *Anonymus A*, who probably worked in Florence in the early 1450s, was the likely source of three quotations from Bruni's *De primo bello Punico* in the notes in manuscript P of Silius in Paris (Bibl. Nat. lat. 8066).²⁴

Did Bruni know Silius? Botley has asked this question and answered it negatively.²⁵ Unlike Polybius, Bruni includes the episode of Regulus and the snake, known from a wide range of Latin sources,²⁶ but he does not seem to have drawn on the particular version found in the *Punica*. This is not really surprising, as it is unlikely that he had an opportunity to see the poem. Though Poggio, the discoverer of the manuscript, had a copy made, which in 1418 he asked Francesco Barbaro to send to Niccolò Niccoli, it appears from a letter to Niccoli in 1425 that the latter still had it in his possession.²⁷

2. Readers and manuscripts

Our next figure, Leon Battista Alberti (1404–72), was many-faceted: accomplished student of the classics, humanist and vernacular author, writer on and practitioner of art and architecture. It cannot be coincidental that he is known as an early reader of two of the works discovered by Poggio.²⁸ Exactly when and how he came to read Silius is obscure.²⁹ He cites Silius in two of his *Intercenales*, satiric prose entertainments inspired by Lucian, composed over a long period, from ca. 1430 to the 1440s.³⁰ In *Naufragus* (book 9), he quotes the lines on hunger from the siege of Saguntum (2.472–73) and makes a reference to *Silio poete*; in *Fatum et pater infelix* (book 8), he quotes *sententiae* on the

²⁴ On *Pun.* 3.385, 6.663 and 6.695; see *CTC* 366, (on the date) 351.

²⁵ Botley (2004) 31 n. 119.

²⁶ *Liv. Per.* 18, *Pun.* 6.140–293, *Gel.* 7.3, *Plin. Nat.* 8.37, *V. Max.* 1.8.ext.19, *Flor. Epit.* 1.18.20; see Ianziti (2006) 189 and, in general, Bassett (1955) and Augoustakis (2006).

²⁷ *CTC* 349; Harth (1984–87) 1:144–45 (no. 51, letter to Niccoli). See also Clark (1899) 124–26.

²⁸ The other was Lucretius. Lucretius was used in a letter to Brunelleschi ca. 1436; see Grafton (2000) 75 and Gambino (2001).

²⁹ *CTC* 350 with n. 53; also see Cardini, Bertoloni, and Regoliosi (2005) 474.

³⁰ Collected in ca. 1439, see Mancini (1967) 139 and Marsh (1987).

ineluctability of fate (*Pun.* 3.134–35, 5.75–76, 5.406–7), again mentioning the ancient Roman poet by name. It is much more likely that Alberti owed his knowledge of the *Punica* to Poggio, his colleague in the Curia, than to Niccoli, whom he satirizes in the *Intercenales* themselves as *Libripeta*.³¹

Beginning in 1435 and involving several leading humanists³² of the first half of the fifteenth century, a debate arose over Scipio and Caesar and their respective contributions to the Roman state. Silius is occasionally brought into this debate as a source, but it is not clear how many of the participants would have read him, in addition to Poggio himself. Defending his republican views against Guarino, in *Defensio* 170–75, Poggio invokes Silius in general as a witness to Scipio's *virtutes*, and in particular the poet's praise of Scipio at the end of *Punica* 17 (especially 17.651–52), whereas Guarino da Verona simply names Silius as one of the poets who demonstrates that Latin literature survived the transition to Empire.³³

The earliest surviving manuscript copies of the *Punica* come from Florence (1440–50): G (Bibl. Laur., Laur. [Gadd.] 91 sup. 35) and R (Bibl. Vat., Vat. lat. 3300), the latter once in the possession of Panormita (Antonio Beccadelli); K (Bibl. Laur., Laur. 37, 18) of 1453–54; N (Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Add. c. 192) of 1455; and M (Bibl. Marc., Marc. lat. XII. 68) of 1447–55.³⁴ G, from which not only R (in the same hand) was copied, but also EKMNU, was used, Delz believes, by the Florentine bookseller, Vespasiano da Bisticci (1422–98),³⁵ for the production of copies for important commissioners or collectors. M, for example, entered the library of Nicholas V,³⁶ A (Budapest, EK Cod. lat. 8) was (eventually) owned by Matthias Corvinus of Hungary,³⁷ and

³¹ The preface of the fourth book of the *Intercenales* is addressed to Poggio. Poggio himself cites *sententiae* from Silius in an earlier work, *Disceptatio de auaritia* (see *CTC* 350), and in a late letter (Harth [1984–87] 3:230 (no. 32, to Ludovico Petroni, Florence, dated in April–June 1454).

³² In addition to Poggio and Guarino, Ciriaco d'Ancona may be mentioned.

³³ For more details, see *CTC* 349–50. The question of the role of this debate in contemporary political ideology and “civic humanism” is significant but too large a topic to pursue here; see Canfora (2001).

³⁴ Delz xvi, xviii, xxii, xxiii. The decoration of M fol. 3r by Zanobi Strozzi is dated to ca. 1450 by Garzelli (1985) 1:22.

³⁵ Delz xvi. See de la Mare (1996) 166–207 and de la Mare (1985) 1:401–6.

³⁶ Delz xxii.

³⁷ Delz xlii–iii; see Csapodi and Csapodi-Gárdonyi (1981) 41 (no. 12) and de la Mare (1985) 1:454–56.

E (Bibl. Laur., Laur. 37, 15), dated before 1457, comes into the possession of Piero di Cosimo de' Medici.³⁸ U (Bibl. Vat., Urb. lat. 358) was found in the library of Federigo da Montefeltro at Urbino.³⁹

M, "the remarkable *Silius Italicus*,"⁴⁰ a luxurious vellum manuscript, contained splendid full-page miniatures which highlighted rhetorical oppositions of Hannibal and Scipio, land and sea, Carthage and Rome.⁴¹ On its first folio it strikingly parades fifteen heroes belonging to both sides. Made for Nicholas V, the manuscript is included in the catalogue of his books compiled for his successor, Calixtus III (1455–58).⁴² When Vasari saw and recorded it about a hundred years later, it was in the library of the monastery of SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Venice, where it had migrated perhaps in the papacy of Paul II.⁴³ Most of the miniatures were removed between 1650 and 1789 (when the manuscript entered the Biblioteca Marciana). The lost ones are of *Silius Italicus*, Scipio, Hannibal, Nicholas V, Neptune in a four-wheeled chariot drawn by dolphins,⁴⁴ and opposed female figures of Carthage and Rome.⁴⁵ Part of Vasari's description⁴⁶ is of the first folium, fol. 3r, where there is a figure of the poet (*Silus autor*),⁴⁷ dressed as an ancient warrior, within the initial "O" of the manuscript, and around the text are, in Vasari's words:

certe mezze figurine in un componimento fatto d'ovati e tondi, ed altre cose simili, con un'infinità d'ucelletti e puttini tanto ben fatti, che non si può più desiderare. Vi sono appresso in simile maniera Annone Car-

³⁸ Delz xii–xiii; see also de la Mare (1985) 1:427–28, 439 (attribution to Franciscus de Tians of Pistoia).

³⁹ Before 1474: Delz xxxi and de la Mare (1985) 1:432, 537–38.

⁴⁰ The words are those of de la Mare (1985) 1:426.

⁴¹ See Garzelli (1985) 21–24 for a full discussion.

⁴² Manfredi (1994) 427–28 (no. 684). See Donati (2000) 90 n. 49 (M is not annotated by Odo); Fohlen (1985) 9–10. It disappears between the inventories of 1455 and 1475 and has no descendants (see Rizzo [1995] 393). Garzelli (1985) 1:24 expresses scepticism on the connection with Nicholas V. There is a reference to *Silius Italicus* in an excursus on the Vatican Library in a poem by Paolo Spinoso dedicated to Sixtus IV, dated 1479–81; see Bianchi (2004) 147–49 (Vat. lat. 3597, fol. 9r–10r). *Silius* was one of Spinoso's favorite poets.

⁴³ Donati (2000) 90 n. 49. If this is right, it remained in the library during the reign of Pius II (1458–64).

⁴⁴ Garzelli (1985) 1:23 notes that this comes from a sarcophagus and is a new theme in Florentine art.

⁴⁵ On the iconography see Garzelli (1985) 1:23–24.

⁴⁶ Vasari (1878) 2:523–26.

⁴⁷ Reeve (1983) 389 n. 7 suggests that "the scribe of Poggio's copy may have called the poet 'Silus'."

taginese, Asdrubale, Lelio, Massinissa, C. Salinatore, Nerone, Sempromio, M. Marcello, Q. Fabio, l'altro Scipione, e Vibio.

(Vasari [1878] 2.524)⁴⁸

...some half-figures, introduced into ovals and circles, and other similar things, with a number of small birds and cherubs so well made that nothing better could be desired. Near these are similar representations of Hanno the Carthaginian, Hasdrubal, Laelius, Massinissa, C. Salinator, Nero, Sempronius, M. Marcellus, Q. Fabius, the other Scipio, and Vibius.

Facing this, Vasari says, was “papa Niccola V ritratto di naturale, con un manto cangiante pagonazzo e rosso, e tutto ricamato d'oro. È senza barba in profilo affatto, e guarda verso il principio dell'opera che è dirincontro, e con la man destra accenna verso quella, quasi maravigliandosi”⁴⁹ (“...a portrait of Pope Nicholas V, in a striped mantle of violet and red, all embroidered with gold. He is in full profile without a beard, and he looks towards the beginning of the work opposite to him, to which he points with an air of wonderment”).⁵⁰ Vasari's description of Mars in a chariot likewise corresponds to the extant miniature at the end.⁵¹ This last is attributed to Francesco Pesellino, a follower of Filippino Lippi and Fra Angelico, who died in 1457.⁵² The nature of the artistic embellishment, with its emphasis on exemplary figures and triumphs, gives us some idea of how the poem was received in its contemporary cultural context.

Another colleague of Poggio's and Alberti's in the Curia is Flavio Biondo (1392–1463), one of the most important humanist scholars in the reign of Nicholas V (1447–55).⁵³ It may be Biondo's estrangement from the Curia for most of this period (1449–53) that led to the curious absence of Silius Italicus from his *Italia illustrata* (1447–53).⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Formaggio and Basso (1960) 68 (color); Delz xx.

⁴⁹ Vasari (1878) 2:524.

⁵⁰ The translations are taken from Hinds (1963) 1:344.

⁵¹ Vasari (1878) 2:524–25; Formaggio and Basso (1960) 69 (color); Delz xx.

⁵² See Toesca (1932). Garzelli (1985) 1:22–23 supposes that the lost miniatures are also by Pesellino. See Hughes (1997) 185. For the six triumphs of Petrarch on a *cassone* (ca. 1450) in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, in Boston, Mass., attributed to Pesellino, see Hughes (1997) 96–99. On the popularity of the theme of triumphs, see Hughes (1997) 100–2, Callman (1974) 45–46, and Maddalo (1996) 84–85 on the influence of the iconography of Petrarch's triumphs.

⁵³ Fubini (1968) 536–59.

⁵⁴ See e.g., Cappelletto (1992) 684–87 and 703–7 (on the sources).

One expects, given the poet's attention to geography,⁵⁵ that Biondo's work, a cultural geography of Italy, would have drawn frequently on the *Punica*, had he had access to it. It is certainly the geographical catalogues of the third and eighth books of the *Punica* that aroused the most painstaking attention from the commentators of a slightly later period.⁵⁶

Yet Silius Italicus is not to be found in Clavuot's list of the sources of *Italia illustrata*.⁵⁷ Clavuot based his list on a 16th century printed edition of the *Italia illustrata* (Basel, 1559). Nogara, however, had already recorded one quotation from Silius Italicus (actually as *Silus*), an addendum to E (Florence, Ricc. 1198, fol. 46), dated by him to 1462.⁵⁸ The poet's name alone appears in the *editio princeps* (Rome, 1474), but even this disappeared from the later edition used by Clavuot.

When Biondo discusses the white herds of the river Clitumnus (4.10 White), he cites Virgil (*G.* 2.146–48, *laus Italiae*), Pliny the Elder (from Servius *ad G.* 2.146–48), Lucan (1.473–74), and Propertius (2.19.25–26). To these, he subsequently adds a passage from Silius.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ See Bona (1998), as well as Gibson (56–67) and Manolaraki (293–321) in this volume. Raffaello Maffei of Volterra (1451–1522) often quotes Silius in the geographical parts of his encyclopedic *Commentariorum urbanorum libri XXXVIII*, published in Rome in 1506; cf. *CTC* 363.

⁵⁶ Silius' poetic handling of places is particularly appreciated by Galeotto Marzio da Narni, who cites lines *Pun.* 8.592–97, in his attack on Filelfo's *Sforziad*:

Nomina enim ciuitatum ita ieiuna et nuda ponis, ut nihil ad nos, nisi nomen urbis ex tuo poemate attingat. Quanto rectius alii poetae, qui et delectant et docent, quod in Silio Italico, qui maiore cura, quam ingenio carmina [cf. Plin. *Epist.* 3.7.5] componebat, optime apparet...

You put down the city names so lacking in adornment and bare that beyond the city names nothing pertains to us from your poem. How much more properly do other poets, who both delight and instruct, as is seen excellently in Silius Italicus, who composed his poems with greater carefulness than talent... (Juhász [1932] 5; *CTC* 351).

The basic usefulness of Silius in providing Latin poetic place names should not be overlooked. The expression of some Spanish geographical details in Paulo Pompilio's *De triumpho Granatense* (Rome, 1490 [?]) may owe something to Silius, especially as Pompilio studied at the Roman Studium during Calderini's time; cf. Perosa (1973a).

⁵⁷ Clavuot (1990) 307–22.

⁵⁸ Nogara (1927) 226; see now White (2005) 214, 373 n. 31, 417 n. 39. Michael Reeve (*per litteras*) informs me that there is a similar addition in Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek, F. 66 fol. 188r.

⁵⁹ Biondo was a friend of Pietro Odo, who lectured on the *Punica* in Rome at this time (see below). Might Odo have been Biondo's informant?

Meuano⁶⁰ Varenus, arat cui diuitis uber
 campi Fulginia et patulis Clitumnus in aruis
 candentes gelido perfundit flumine tauros. (*Pun.* 4.544–46)

Varenus from Mevania, who ploughs Fulginia, fertile with its rich plain, and whose white bulls Clitumnus washes with its chill stream, amid spreading fields.

To judge from Domizio Calderini's commentaries on this locus of the *Punica* (...*una tamen et constans est poetarum uox Clitumnum esse iuxta Meuaniam*...), "yet the poets say unanimously and consistently that the Clitumnus is near Mevania", on Statius (*Silu.* 1.4.128) and on Juvenal (12.13), the white bulls of Mevania continued to be of interest to humanist readers,⁶¹ possibly because of their association with the Roman triumph, a widely popular theme, as we have seen above.⁶²

Lecturing on Silius in Rome began in the reign of the next Pope but one. Pius II (1458–64) was himself a humanist whom we would expect to have read Silius. I have found no evidence of this, however. Nevertheless, a passage from his *Commentarii* (5.26), relating a conversation on "ancient history," which the Pope had with his Gonfaloniere Federigo da Montefeltro in 1461, shows another facet of the type of interest humanist readers would have with regard to the *Punica*:

A few days later the Pope left the city in the dead of night, reaching the Anio before the sun had risen. On crossing the river he met Federigo and the cardinal of Teano at the head of ten squadrons of cavalry, who were to accompany him as bodyguards as far as Ponte Lucano. The Pope was delighted by the splendid array of weapons, horses and military trappings; for what is more impressive than the full panoply of an army on the march? The sun shone on the shields, and the plumed helmets made a wonderful sight, the squadrons of armed men bristling with forests of lances. Young men were running here and there, wheeling their horses, clashing their swords and brandishing their spears in mock battle. Federigo, since he had read widely, asked the Pope if the generals of antiquity had been as well armed as they are today. The Pope replied that every type of weapon which is used today could be found described in Homer and Virgil, as well as many which are no longer used. For poets, he said, even if they do invent some things, never depart far from

⁶⁰ *sic* β.

⁶¹ See Dunston (1968) 95–96. Domizio Calderini worked in the 1470s. Poliziano passes over the topic in silence in his commentary on Statius' *Siluae* (1480–81).

⁶² In his discussion of the Roman triumph in *Roma triumphans* (Basel 1531), Biondo cites the Virgil passage alone (209).

the truth, and usually describe things which were at some point in use. The conversation worked round to the Trojan War, and when Federico tried to play down its significance the Pope proved to him that it had been a great event and that its fame was justified.⁶³

Again, the Renaissance commentators, such as Calderini on the siege of Saguntum (*Pun.* 1.296–375), show considerable interest in both personal and larger-scale weapons, for example, the *ballista* (1.335). An epic poem on war operations in Italy must have been of considerable contemporary resonance—indeed Francesco Filelfo describes his Latin historical epic, the *Sforziad* (1450s–60s), as *res Italicas uersu heroico*, “Italian deeds in epic meter.”⁶⁴

Classicizing panegyric epics in this vein, written for leading contemporary figures such as Federico himself (*Feltriad* and *Martiad*) in the latter half of the fifteenth century, provide another possible direction of the influence of the *Punica*.⁶⁵ As Lippincott states: “The primary literary touchstone for the structure and poetic style of the poems is Virgil’s *Aeneid*. Homer’s *Iliad*, the *Thebaid* of Statius and the *Punic Wars* of Silius Italicus are also used, but more often as sources for isolated phrases, images and allusions.”⁶⁶ It is difficult to trace the *Punica*’s influence, which we would expect to see from the 1460s, for various reasons. On the practical level, not all of the poems have been edited. For example, a work that has received a modern edition with running commentary is Tito Strozzi’s *Borsiad* (written over a long period up to the author’s death in 1505).⁶⁷ Though Claudian, Lucan, Ovid, Statius, and Virgil appear in the modern edition’s index, Silius Italicus does not. Then, unlike the *Aeneid*, the *Punica* does not have an “ideal”

⁶³ Translation taken from Hutchinson (1988) 31.

⁶⁴ *Francisci Philelfi uiri grece et latine eruditissimi Epistolarum familiarum, libri XXX–VII...* (Venice, 1502), book 9, fol. 65r (June 1451), cited from Lippincott (1989) 418 n. 7. In 1464, Filelfo was seeking information about a copy of Silius (*Epist.* fol. 116 and 165, see Delz vii n. 3), while Galeotto Marzio da Narni was using verses from the *Punica* to correct false quantities in the Filelfo’s epic; e.g., of the Ticinus, citing *Pun.* 1.45–46, 5.403 (Juhász [1932] 7, 22; cf. *CTC* 351).

⁶⁵ Lippincott (1989) 417 (“the fashion seems to have been pervasive”) and 427 (“a largely self-sustaining invention of the humanists”). For a partial list, see Lippincott (1989) 417 n. 5, and, further, Belloni (1912) 87–117, Zabughin (1921–23) 1:287–302, Everson (2001) 56 (Silius Italicus a possible model), 103–7 (discussing reasons for the failure of the humanist Latin epics).

⁶⁶ Lippincott (1989) 417.

⁶⁷ Ludwig (1977).

hero as a single, dominating, protagonist.⁶⁸ Further, Silius himself is so imbued with Virgilian ideas and phraseology that it may not be easy to distinguish the two. Pietro Marso, however, seems to imply that his commentary (first printed in 1483) is a second-best alternative to this kind of historical epic. In the envoi, addressed to his dedicatee Prince Virginio Orsini, a *condottiere* of Sixtus IV, he says:

quem [Scipionem] in armis omnique officio te referre quis nescit: quod cum ita sit ardentissima uirtus tua incorruptis litterarum monumentis celebrari meretur et debet: aliumque furorem poeticum ac sonoram tubam exposcit. Interea haec commentariola excellentiae tuae dicata auspiciis tuis legantur.⁶⁹

Who is unaware that in warfare and every office you recall Scipio? This being so, your blazing virtue deserves and ought to be made famous by the uncorrupted records of literature (cf. Liv. *Praef.* 6). It demands another poetic inspiration and sounding trumpet. Meanwhile, let this commentary, dedicated to your Excellency, be read under your auspices.

3. *Teachers and commentators*

Primus patrum nostrorum memoria huius poetae sacros fontes reserare arcanaque ingredi ac publice in hac florentissima urbis Romae academia profiteri ausus est Petrus Montopolita, uir certe id aetatis eruditissimus... Secuti sunt uiri saeculorum memoria digni ac Romani eloquii sidera et clarum decus, Pomponius et Domitius, praeceptores mei.⁷⁰

In our fathers' memory, Pietro from Montopoli, certainly the most learned man at that time, first dared to unlock this poet's holy founts and engage with his mysteries and to lecture in public in this excellent Academy of the city of Rome. He was followed by men worthy of eternal remembrance, glorious stars of Roman eloquence [cf. Petrarch's *Fam.* 24.4, Luc. 7.63], my teachers Pomponio and Domizio.

This passage establishes a line of Roman succession: from Odo (who dies ca. 1463) to Pomponio and Domizio, and then to Marso himself (1442–1512), by 1481 in his turn a teacher of rhetoric at the Roman *Studium Urbis*. Pietro Odo's teaching is preserved in notes attributed

⁶⁸ On the problematization of heroism in Silius, see Tipping (193–218), Fucecchi (219–39), and Ariemma (241–76) in this volume.

⁶⁹ Cited from Marso's edition of the *Punica* (Venice 1493). *CTC* 387–88, Dykmans (1988) 19–20.

⁷⁰ From Pietro Marso's dedication, *CTC* 372, 387.

to him in W (Vat. lat. 2779),⁷¹ a scholastic manuscript dated by Delz to ca. 1460. This also contains corrections to the text, which correspond with autograph corrections in Γ (Ottob. lat. 1258). As Delz has demonstrated, it is from W, a manuscript commissioned for Odo, that the Roman family of manuscripts associated with his pupil, Pomponio Leto, descends *aliquo modo*.⁷² Γ , which contains many of Odo's emendations, but fewer expository annotations, does not seem to have passed through Pomponio Leto's hands.⁷³ It was apparently rediscovered by Domizio Calderini, who used it in 1473, adding emendations, often signed. In Rome, Odo began the process of what Vincenzo Fera has called "the true 'discovery' of a classical text." That "true discovery" comes when the text "is incorporated in humanistic culture—something that takes place in schools and universities through its editing and explanation."⁷⁴

The second key figure in Rome, through his teaching, editing, and commentaries, was Giulio Pomponio Leto (1428–98), from whom much more survives. Not only do we have an autograph manuscript and autograph annotations (in Π [Borg. lat. 417] and elsewhere), but also students' manuscripts and records of courses.⁷⁵ Further, Pomponio Leto was in some way responsible for the second Roman edition of the *Punica* (1471, Hain 14734),⁷⁶ which, it has been argued, was prepared for students at the Roman *Studium*. It was certainly used by them, as we shall see below.⁷⁷ Pressures of space prevent me from discussing in detail the many facets of Pomponio Leto's engagement with Silius Italicus. Therefore I will focus on one instructive manuscript.

Soon after he was released from prison in Castel Sant'Angelo and returned to his Chair at the Roman *Studium*, Pomponio Leto copied and annotated a de luxe parchment manuscript of Silius Italicus for Fabio Mazzatosta, his young private pupil from Viterbo (Y, Vat. lat.

⁷¹ *CTC* 369–70, Delz xxxii–xxxiii, Donati (2000) 60.

⁷² Delz xxxiii.

⁷³ Pomponio's hand is generally found somewhere in the MSS he used.

⁷⁴ Fera (1990) 519.

⁷⁵ *CTC* 373–77. See Dunston (1967); also Zabughin (1906), brought up to date by Lanzillotta (2000).

⁷⁶ Colophon: *Opus iam neglectum Pomponius recognovit. Anno domini MCCCCLXXI VI Calend. Mai. Romae.*

⁷⁷ Blasio (1986) 484–85; see Farenga (1997) 74 on the "destinazione scolastica." Campanelli and Pincelli (2000) 122–23.

3302).⁷⁸ This manuscript is interesting, partly because it is part of a set, and the whole series amounts to a curriculum for the young student, but more so for our purposes here because it contains spectacular miniatures that set it apart from the other Mazzatosta manuscripts. The initial folium with its white vine-scrolls is typical of the series,⁷⁹ but not so the full-page pen-drawings on fols. 2r–5r, of Fabius, Scipio, Hercules (an important presence in the poem),⁸⁰ a kneeling woman with loosened hair (Rome defeated), victorious Rome in a triumphal chariot and a portrait of the author (?) wearing a laurel wreath. The horseback figures of Fabius and Scipio recall the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, and the style of the drawings (attributed to the Paduan scribe and illuminator Sanvito) coheres with the new antiquarianism,⁸¹ that we see, for example, in Mantegna, and that is to be further developed in Rome by Jacopo Ripanda. Maddalo argues that the drawings in Y are connected with the theme of exemplarity, not just in the poem's narrative itself, but also as stressed in Pomponio Leto's commentary, with the purpose of encouraging the young Fabio in the ancient heroic virtues.⁸² Attractive as this theory is, in my experience there is very little explicit teaching of that sort in Leto's commentaries. The scholia in Y are brief and basic ("magro e saltuario" in Zabughin's words),⁸³ and, for all intents and purposes, stop at *Punica* 3.318, long before either Fabius or Scipio comes on the scene.⁸⁴

Leto could have heard Pietro Odo's lectures on Silius Italicus (within the period 1457–62).⁸⁵ His own lectures cannot be precisely dated. Whether or not our next figure of importance, Domizio Calderini, heard Leto lecture, he was certainly familiar with his work and must have taken up the *Punica* as a response and challenge to his colleague. Calderini was born ca. 1446 and died in Rome in 1478, in his early thirties. His father was a notary, and Domizio received a good humanistic education, first at Verona and later at Venice. What prompted his move to Rome in the mid-1460s, is unknown, but he soon joined

⁷⁸ Delz xxxv; Maddalo (1991) and (1996); Maddalo and Bianchi (1996); Zabughin (1909–10) 1:tav.7.

⁷⁹ Zabughin (1909–10) 1:tav.9; Ruysschaert (1968) 275–82.

⁸⁰ See the essays by Asso (189–92), Tipping (209–18), and Manolaraki (295–306) in this volume.

⁸¹ Maddalo (1996) 84.

⁸² Maddalo (1996) 85.

⁸³ And mainly concerned with geography, Zabughin (1909–10) 2:156.

⁸⁴ *CTC* 375.

⁸⁵ *CTC* 379.

the circle of Cardinal Bessarion, as *secretarius et familiaris continuus commensalis*.⁸⁶ Calderini's short and prolific career as commentator coincided with the beginnings of printing in Rome.⁸⁷ He was the first to publish a printed commentary. His Martial commentary (Rome 1474) was soon followed by his commentaries on Ovid's *Ibis* (Rome 1474), Juvenal (Venice 1475), and Statius' *Silvae* (Venice 1475), to name just the most important. He expounded Silius in 1473, *Romae in academia* (Γ fol. 210r).

Calderini's "commentary" on Silius Italicus was possibly the first on the whole poem.⁸⁸ It was never published, though Calderini himself quite frequently refers to a commentary on Silius about to be published.⁸⁹ What we now have is not a finished commentary of the kind that Calderini would issue in print, but a set of lecture notes, written into the margins of five copies of Pomponio Leto's edition of 1471 and the margins of manuscript Σ (Bibl. Casanatense Ms. 1064).⁹⁰ In my view, the source of these is closer to the lecturer's own notes (what Zabughin calls "chirografi") than to student *dictata*, namely the notes students took at lectures and later compiled as a separate manuscript or entered in the margins of a text.⁹¹ Since this commentary influenced not only its first student audience, a number of whom went to some pains to record it, but also, through Marso, the whole expository as well as textual tradition,⁹² something should be said here about its nature.

⁸⁶ On his life and career, see Perosa (1973b). The quotation is from Perosa (1973b) 597.

⁸⁷ Dionisotti (1968) 183; see Perosa (1973b) 603 on the "enorme diffusione che i commenti calderiniani ebbero."

⁸⁸ The so-called *Anonymus B* appears to be later (*CTC* 366–67).

⁸⁹ Dunston (1968) 90–91, *CTC* 383.

⁹⁰ There are four copies in the Vatican Library of the edition of the *Punica* with interlinear and marginal notes which originate from Calderini's lectures: Stamp. Ross. 1122 (A), Inc. III 4 (B), Stamp. Ross. 1446 (C) and Inc. Prop. V 39 (E). To these must now be added Houghton Inc. 3431 (A) (F), the most complete witness. [The sigla are in italics to distinguish them from the sigla for the MSS of the *Punica*.]

⁹¹ C may come from a different source from the others. On the nature of *dictata*, see Sabbadini (1920) 43 n. 1; Zabughin (1909–10) 1:258; Campanelli and Pincelli (2000) 128–31. In 1491, Girolamo Avanzi saw *codices* full of marginal notes among Calderini's *Nachlass*; see Dionisotti (1968) 175 (Hieronymi Avantii in *Catullum et in Priapeius Emendationes* [Venice 1495], fols. a ivv–e vir).

⁹² Marso's knowledge of the "great lacuna" in the eighth book probably comes from Calderini; see Dunston (1968) 104–5 and, for more examples, Muecke (2005) 65–67. Marso could have attended Calderini's lectures in 1470–71 (Dykman [1988] 8–10).

A lecturer such as Calderini aimed to help his students understand the text on which he was commenting, while he also had a wider aim of teaching general knowledge about aspects of antiquity. This resulted in his commentary containing much that now seems irrelevant. The text itself was corrected and at times paraphrased. The commentary proper consists of: a) short explicatory notes (often beginning with *nam*) and b) longer notes based on ancient sources, often composed from two or more sources. The differences between these sources are noticed and sometimes a preferred version is designated.

A major preoccupation of the earlier humanist commentators was proper names. As these were particularly prone to corruption the first task was to identify, and if necessary correct, the name in question. In the catalogues in *Punica* 3, 8, and 9, where the notes tend to be thickest, some proper names were still corrupt in the manuscripts and printed editions. If the humanist scholar then proceeded to Strabo or Pliny the Elder, again the name might be corrupted in the text or the translation being used.⁹³ Once the name had been corrected, it was necessary to identify the place (or person) mentioned. A favorite phrase in Calderini's commentary is *de...intelligit*, "by this he understands...as meaning." E.g., in *Punica* 9.229–30 (Pyrene) we read:

hoc loco Pirenaeos montes intelligit qui diuidunt Galliam ab Hispania [Plin. *Nat.* 3.30]. *alibi Pyrene est fons in Acrocorintho* [Plin. *Nat.* 4.11, Str. 8.6.21]

Here he means the Pyrenaean mountains which divide Gaul from Spain. Elsewhere Pyrene is a fountain in Acrocorinth.

Then in poetry there is the allusive use of a place name. At *Punica* 8.602–3, the text mentions *Euganea tellus* and *profugi Antenoris* ("Euganean land" and "Antenor's exiles"). Calderini's comment is *Patauium intelligit* ("he means Patavium"). Obviously identification of peoples and places is of crucial importance for the understanding of a historical epic such as Silius'. Notes on proper names provide much scope for imparting the knowledge of geography, mythology, history, and customs so desired at the time,⁹⁴ even, as I have mentioned, at the risk of incorporating much that is strictly irrelevant.

Consider the note on Pyrene I have just quoted. Calderini distinguishes two different significations of the same name. No one reading

⁹³ See Muecke and Dunston (1998) 50–63.

⁹⁴ Poliziano's reasons for commenting on Statius' *Siluae* include their "knowledge of geography, mythology, history and customs." See Garin (1976) 7:872.

Punica 9 would be tempted to think of Pyrene, the spring in Acrocorinth, and students, we might think, might better not be confused by its mention. However, much in Calderini's commentary is of this nature—and not only of his commentary. Such distinctions, a constant trait of Giovanni Tortelli's *De Orthographia* (ca. 1453), must often have been invoked by humanist lecturers. As Zabughin shows, Pomponio Leto similarly distinguishes between homonyms in his commentary on Statius' *Thebaid* (1470–71).⁹⁵ Since the existing dictionaries, mythological compilations, and encyclopedias were medieval, Roman commentaries at this period aspired to fill the gap. Niccolò Perotti's *Cornu copiae*, which begins as a commentary on Martial and ends as a kind of encyclopedic dictionary keyed to a small portion of Martial's text (the *De spectaculis* and the first book of the *Epigrams*), shows how far this approach could be taken.⁹⁶ Calderini's constant recycling of material from one commentary to another is also part of this trend.

One way of analyzing Calderini's work is to pick out what I call his "methodological terminology," the phrases that show where his interests lie. Apart from the explanatory use of *intelligere* (and *sensus est, dicit, dicitur*, vel sim.), I have found uses of *imitatio* (vel sim.), *allusio*, *alludit* and *tangit*, and, the largest category, various ways of distinguishing between poetic fiction and history, allied to comparisons with the accounts of the events in Livy and Polybius. All these terms are clearly borrowed from Servius, Virgil's famous commentator. Calderini in fact relies heavily on Servius and other ancient commentaries, such as the scholia to Apollonius Rhodius and Lycophron.⁹⁷ Accordingly he points out poetic imitation of episodes (from Homer and Virgil), and language (Homer, Virgil, and Lucretius). References to Lucan are surprisingly few, though at the beginning of *Punica* 9, he relates the portents recounted by the soldier at the end of the eighth book to the matrona's prophecy at Lucan's *De bello civili* 1.673–95.

Comments which talk about allusion are less frequent than those which point to imitation. *Allusio* seems to refer to a hidden reference, that is, to a custom or historical parallel not discernible simply in the wording of the text. For example, on the use of the epithet *Lagea* in the shipwreck simile at *Pun.* 10.321, Calderini comments: *allusio est*

⁹⁵ Zabughin (1909–10) 2:57.

⁹⁶ Kristeller (1985) 304–5. See now the edition by Charlet and Furno (1989–2001).

⁹⁷ Coppini (1979) 1133.

ad nauem Gai principis quae aduexit obeliscum ex Aegypto [Plin. *Nat.* 36.70] (“there is an allusion to the ship of the emperor Gaius which brought the obelisk from Egypt”). Similarly, on *Pun.* 10.476, we find:

nullum Cinnam periisse in pugna hac reperimus sed poeta ficto nomine ad Cinnam illum alludit qui post tot tempora primo consulatu perturbata re publica aufugit Octauiumque collegam interfecit.

I have found no Cinna who died in this battle, but the poet by means of a fictitious name alludes to that Cinna who much later on in his first consulship, when the state was in uproar, escaped and killed his colleague Octavius.

A large number of notes involve the distinction between history and poetic fiction, and this too is Servian—and Pomponian. According to Zabughin, again a major part of Pomponio’s commentary on Lucan consists of a comparison with the historical sources.⁹⁸ Among the poetic inventions to which Calderini draws attention are the painted temple at Litternum (6.653–97) and the story of the white hind (13.115–37).

The student copyists have faithfully preserved very long notes that often consist of summaries of Livy, punctuated by brief mentions of the Polybian version, if significantly different from Livy. On *Pun.* 2.599, on the description of the Saguntines burning their treasures, there is a long note from Livy (21.12.4–14.4). Livy tells of the Saguntine Alcon going to Hannibal to negotiate peace terms, but he is too afraid to return when he learns how harsh the terms actually are. A Spaniard Alorcus explains to the Saguntines the conditions, but the Saguntine leaders decide to destroy their riches and themselves. In Silius, the motivation for this is completely different, since the fury Tisiphone attacks the city. As Calderini observes: *Silius poetica licentia fabulam cum historia commiscuit* (“using poetic licence Silius has mingled myth with history”).

Many other comments of this nature arise from the same approach. Careful comparisons of Livy and Polybius with Silius allow Calderini to point out where the poet is especially close to a source, where he differs, and where Livy and Polybius themselves differ. E.g., at *Pun.* 11.316, Calderini says: *historia est et eadem fere uerba apud Liuium*, “this is history and almost the same words are in Livy.”⁹⁹ In a couple of

⁹⁸ Caesar and also Florus, Appian and Plutarch; Zabughin (1909–10) 2:28–46 (on Statius’ *Thebaid*, see 2:46–60); see Ussani (1904).

⁹⁹ Cf. Spaltenstein (1990) 125: “pour le reste Silius suit Liv. de près.”

places (*Pun.* 16.28, 16.115),¹⁰⁰ he notices discrepancies, so marked that they have led modern scholars to wonder if Silius may have been following some other source that we no longer have. Such close comparison allows Calderini to emend the corrupt *pacullo* or *pattullo* of the manuscripts at *Pun.* 11.58 and 311 to *Pacuuio: Domitius putat Pacuuio nam Pacuius est apud Liuium* (“Domizio thinks it is *Pacuuio*, because he is Pacuvius in Livy [23.8.1]”).¹⁰¹

On the whole Calderini assumes that ‘history’ is what has actually happened and that Livy’s and Polybius’ narratives are to be equated with the historical course of events (allowing for their occasional disagreements). For this reason paraphrases of Livy often appear introduced simply as *historia*, rather than being cited as from Livy. However, Calderini does notice other things to be at work also. Poetic fiction can be congruent with history, as well as in contradiction with it. For example, at *Pun.* 9.99, we read:

Thoantis Aetoli: apte poeta fingit illic tumulum fuisse Thoantis Aetoli non tam uolens hoc indicare quam tangens historiam quam Strabone auctore [6.1.5] discimus. ea autem est Thoantem Aetolum tenuisse Temesam Bruttios et Apuliam.

The poet’s fiction that this was the tomb of Aetolian Thoas is appropriate. But he is not so much saying this as referring to the historical account that we learn from Strabo. That is that Aetolian Thoas ruled Temesa, the Bruttians, and Apulia.

Silius’ innovations are commended with such adverbs as *apte* or *ingeniose* (“appropriately” or “cleverly”).

Fabula (“myth”) and poetic invention are also recognized as appropriate to the genre. E.g., Calderini says of the mythological aetiology of the name of the Pyrenees from Pyrene, daughter of Bebryx, at *Pun.* 3.420: *noua ficta fabula, non tamen sine ratione historiae*, “a newly-invented myth, though not without historical justification” (because authorities attest Hercules crossed the Pyrenees and the Alps). On Pyrene and Bebryx, however, Calderini’s research partly lets him down. He thinks Silius invents both names, though he could have read at *Plin. Nat.* 3.8: *at quae de Hercule et Pyrene... traduntur fabulosa in primis arbitror* (“but I consider especially mythical the traditions about Hercules and Pyrene”). His explanation of the name Bebryx, on the other hand, is remarkably close to that of the modern commentator, Spaltenstein.

¹⁰⁰ Massinissa goes to see Silanus rather than Scipio.

¹⁰¹ Dunston (1968) 89.

4. *Lives*

Vitae or collections of biographical material, such as the relevant epigrams of Martial and Pliny's letter on Silius (*Ep.* 3.7), were attached to editions and commentaries,¹⁰² but they also circulated separately.¹⁰³ They provide further evidence for the spread of knowledge of, and interest in, Silius and his poem. The Life in Sicco Polenton's collection, *Scriptorum Illustrium Latinae Linguae Libri XVIII*, which was based on Pliny's 3.7, was printed in the Parma edition (1481), with slight changes.¹⁰⁴ Siccon began his ambitious history of Roman literature, composed, he says, over twenty-five years, before the discovery of Silius, the section on whom was included in a latest version (1437). It opens thus:

Habuit aetas ipsa Sillum Italicum, uirum utique cum litteris tum honoribus clarum. Poema extat suum secundo de bello Punico, illo quod Hannibale duce populus Carthaginensis cum Romanis gessit. Nuper id Constantiae, quae Alemaniae ciuitas est Rheno flumini proxima, dum concilium ibi ecclesia dei haberet, repertum est. Quippe incognitum erat prius.

Silius Italicus belongs to this very period, a man distinguished both by his writing and his offices. His poem on the second Punic war is extant, that war which the Roman people waged with the Carthaginians under Hannibal's leadership. Recently it was discovered at Constance, a German city close to the Rhine, when the Church was holding its Council there. In fact it was unknown earlier.

Not exactly biographical, but inspired by that tradition, is a poem by Paolo Spinoso, possibly imagined as being attached to a copy of the *Punica* together with a portrait:¹⁰⁵

Silius Italicus ad opus suum et de se loquitur.
 'Qui cecini domitas dire Carthaginis arces,
 Aeneadam imperio Libie regione subacta,
 Romuleo Hannibalem uictum quoque Marte ferocem,
 terruit Ausonias totiens qui cladibus oras,

¹⁰² For details see *CTC* 343, 349, 358, 361–64, 376, 378.

¹⁰³ The life in ed. r2 is also found in Flor. Naz. II X 43 (fol. 138v) and Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 10806 (fol. 49); see *CTC* 361–62.

¹⁰⁴ *CTC* 361; see Ullmann (1928) 121–22 (book 4).

¹⁰⁵ British Library, Add. 25453, fol. 39v, edited by Bianchi (2004) 63. Poems in the collection date from the early 1460s to 1479 (Bianchi [2004] 43). For epigrams added to manuscripts, see Delz x and xxx.

Silius exegi Romani ex stirpe senatus
hoc opus, ut celse superent gesta inclita Romae.⁷

Silius Italicus addresses his work and speaks of himself. “I, who sang of the conquered citadels of dread Carthage, when Libya was subjected to Roman rule, and of savage Hannibal conquered by Romulean Mars, Hannibal who so often terrified Ausonian coasts with disastrous defeats, I, Silius, from Roman senatorial stock, have perfected this work, so that the glorious deeds of lofty Rome may survive.”

On the other hand, in *Nutricia* (1486, printed 1491), one of the four *Siluae* composed as introductions to his lecture courses, Poliziano says more about the life than the poem:

Post hunc Sidoniae damnat periuria gentis
emeritosque foro Musis tandem asserit annos
Silius, Ausonio qui quondam fulgidus ostro
expulit horribilem uitaque aulaque tyrannum;
ipse obiit plenusque aevi natoque superstes
aspera congenito fixus uestigia clauo. (*Nutricia* 520–25)¹⁰⁶

After him Silius condemns the perjuries of the Sidonian race and finally frees the years of his retirement for the Muses, he who once resplendent in Ausonian purple, saw out the expulsion of the dreadful tyrant from court and life. He died both full of years and outliving a son, his rough feet crippled by a congenital tumor.

Poliziano weaves together Pliny’s 3.7 with Martial 4.14, 7.63, and 9.86.¹⁰⁷ Phraseology taken from Silius himself is less evident here, though it may appear in his use of the phrase *Sidoniae...gentis*, in conjunction with the pervasive theme of perfidy (cf. Mart. 4.14.2–3).¹⁰⁸

A hitherto unknown life of Silius Italicus, headed *Domitius Veronensis in Syllii Italici uitam*, is written on the reverse of the flyleaf of Houghton Inc. 3431 (A), a copy of Pomponio Leto’s edition that contains marginal annotations belonging to Calderini’s commentary. It begins thus: *Duos Syllios eodem fere tempore Romae fuisse inuenio* (“I find there were two Sili in Rome at about the same time”); it goes on to distinguish the poet from Gaius Silius, who marries Messallina (Suet. *Cl.* 26.2, Juv. 10.330–36, Tac. *Ann.* 11.12). Calderini then argues that Silius must have been Roman rather than Spanish: had he been Spanish, he would have been mentioned in Martial’s 1.61, an epigram that

¹⁰⁶ Fantazzi (2004) 144–45 and Bausi (1996) 219.

¹⁰⁷ See Vessey (1974a).

¹⁰⁸ Delz *index* s.v. *Sidonius*; Spaltenstein (1990), 339. Bausi’s index (1996) documents Poliziano’s familiarity with the whole poem.

catalogues poets from Spain.¹⁰⁹ In addition to details about the career of the poet culled from Pliny, he appends, for the first time, the reference in Tac. *Hist.* 3.65.2. Calderini dates Silius' retirement and the composition of the poem to the time of Domitian. This coheres with the interest shown in his commentary to contemporary allusions and to the adulation of the Flavian emperor.¹¹⁰ In the rest of the *Vita*, he interweaves Pliny and Martial, emphasizing Martial's praise and omitting Pliny's famous pronouncement (3.7.5), *scribebat carmina maiore cura quam ingenio* ("he wrote poems with greater carefulness than talent").

Evaluative comments are not easy to find in the commentaries and *Lives* of the later part of the fifteenth century. Marso, whom we have seen earlier presenting his commentary to Prince Virginio Orsini, describes the poem in the same envoi as *opus bellicosum*, "a warlike work." His evaluation of the poem in the *Life* that prefaces his commentary (*uariumque est elegans multiplex ut quid diuinum esse uideatur*, "it is diverse, elegant and complicated, so that it seems a thing divinely-inspired") sounds like cliché.¹¹¹ A partial explanation of this may lie in the absence of a medieval tradition of commentary or it may simply be that the poem did not fall into the right hands.¹¹² The best scholar to comment on the *Punica* was Calderini, and his main aim was to explicate the text from his dazzling knowledge of ancient literature as a whole. Beyond the academy, the *Punica* merged with other cultural representations of the Punic wars, so that it is difficult to discern the impact it may have exerted in its own right.

5. *Epilogue: Hannibal on the Capitol*

In the early sixteenth century, as part of a civic promotion of Rome through its ancient history, the Conservatori had their palace on the Capitol decorated with a series of frescoes of great moments from early Roman history, from Romulus and Remus to the triumph of Aemilius

¹⁰⁹ This argument is repeated in Marso's life at the beginning of his commentary. See also Campbell (1936) and *CTC* 342.

¹¹⁰ E.g. annotations on *Pun.* 3.627, 6.598, 13.845, 14.686.

¹¹¹ Cf. Cic. *Ac.* 1.17 (Plato): *uarius et multiplex et copiosus fuit*; Suet. *Vita Vergili* 21: *argumentum uarium et multiplex*.

¹¹² Lucan provides a comparison; see Sanford (1934). There is a long and appreciative comparison of Lucan with Virgil in the dedicatory letter of Giovanni Sulpizio da Veroli's commentary on the *De bello ciuili* (Venice 1492 = H-C 10241).

Paullus.¹¹³ The artist chosen was the Bolognese Jacopo Ripanda, a man absorbed into the antiquarian passions then prevailing in Roman intellectual culture.¹¹⁴ One room, the *Sala di Annibale* (also called *Sala delle Guerre Puniche*), today remains intact, if we discount its modern restoration, the rest having been destroyed by later building alterations or repainted by the Cavaliere d'Arpino in the early seventeenth century. The *Sala di Annibale* has four scenes, three from the First Punic War, and one from the Second, above painted niches depicting heroic busts of republican consuls.¹¹⁵ The exact subjects of the first three scenes are still a matter of dispute: they include a naval battle, the triumph of Rome over Sicily, and a scene of peace negotiations with Hamilcar, presided over by Lutatius Catulus.¹¹⁶ The fourth panel shows a rather dejected Hannibal on an elephant, his bad eye facing the viewer.¹¹⁷ At this time literary sources for these scenes would have been Livy and his *Periochae*, Florus, Polybius (translated by Niccolò Perotti), Leonardo Bruni's *De primo bello Punico*, and Silius Italicus.

Silius Italicus in fact describes a (fictitious) temple at Liternum, painted with scenes of the First Punic War, perused and then destroyed by Hannibal (*Pun.* 6.653–716).¹¹⁸ Some of the scenes in this ekphrasis may be reflected in the *Sala di Annibale* (e.g., Appius Claudius Caudex's triumph over Sicily [*Pun.* 6.660–62]; the victory at the Aegates islands [*Pun.* 6.684–88]), but the details do not coincide. There is naturally more correspondence with the ekphrastic poem commissioned by the Roman Senate from C. Silvanus Germanicus in 1521 in honor of Leo X.¹¹⁹ In the course of taking the reader through the rooms for the Senate on the first floor of the Palazzo dei Conservatori, Silvanus describes six scenes, in which, surprisingly, the Second Punic War dominates (526–58): the triumph of Rome over Sicily (529–32a), a

¹¹³ In what follows, I am indebted to Ebert-Schifferer (1988) and Farinella (1992).

¹¹⁴ Farinella (1992) 17, Ebert-Schifferer (1988) 179–83.

¹¹⁵ Ebert-Schifferer (1988) 170–71 and n. 284.

¹¹⁶ Ebert-Schifferer (1988) 131–58; Farinella (1992) 96 nn. 17–18.

¹¹⁷ He is certainly not as combative as the Hannibal in Poussin's *Hannibal riding an elephant* (on loan to the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University).

¹¹⁸ See Fowler (2000) 97 with n. 34 on the possible sources of the Silian ekphrasis, as well the analysis of Harrison in this volume (279–92). See also Spaltenstein (1986) 437. Renaissance scholars would have been aware of Plin. *Nat.* 35.22, which records early historical paintings in Rome.

¹¹⁹ See Brummer and Janson (1976) and Ebert-Schifferer (1988) Anhang XIV. The *Silua* is first published in Rome in 1524. See now Reineke (1996).

sea-battle (532b–33),¹²⁰ Hannibal before Trasimene (534–44), Jupiter repelling the Carthaginians' attack on Rome (545–48), the success of Fabius (549–52), and the defeat of Hasdrubal at the Metaurus, with his head being taken to Hannibal (553–58).¹²¹ Silius does not make very much of the episode of Hannibal crossing the marshes (cf. *Pun.* 4.748–50, 758–59), but Silvanus' poem, like Ripanda's fresco, is very close to Livy's account (22.2–4):

E regione uides, oculo per frigora captus
 Vt Lybicus grandi ductor cum clade suorum
 Vndosum per iter properat, qua grandior Arnus
 Fluctibus hybernis furit et se lege teneri
 Riparum haud patitur, sed uiribus auctus apertis
 Insultat pratis ac pronus murmure saxa
 Horrifico uoluens ruit aestiui immemor aluei.
 Hannibal in dorso uasti residens elephantī
 Occupat infestis Thrasymeni littora signis.
 Vrit agros flammis, Romani ut concitet iras
 Consulis in pugnam ardentis sine numine Dium. (*Silua* 534–44)¹²²

You see straight ahead how the Libyan general, having lost his eye because of the cold, with great loss of his men hastens on his water-logged journey. There the swollen Arno rages with wintry billows and refuses to be restrained within its lawful banks, but, its strength increased, runs riot over the open meadows and rushes down with a terrifying roar rolling along rocks, forgetful of its summer channel. Hannibal, sitting on the back of a huge elephant, occupies the shores of Lake Trasimene with hostile standards. He burns the fields, to provoke the resentment of the Roman consul who burns for battle without the approval of the gods.

Silius treats Fabius at the end of book 7 and the beginning of book 8 and the defeat of Hasdrubal at the end of book 15. Again Silvanus has no close parallels.¹²³

And yet, Jupiter's personal intervention in defense of Rome in Silvanus' poem probably suggests a direct allusion to the lengthy treatment

¹²⁰ I do not find persuasive the emendation of these lines proposed by Farinella (1992) 96 n. 17.

¹²¹ The inclusion of these last three scenes in the poem is a bit of a puzzle. Did Silvanus imagine that some patriotically inspiring scenes from the Second Punic War, were needed to balance Hannibal on his elephant? Reineke (1996) 262 speaks of events yet to come being called to mind. Ebert-Schifferer (1988) 128–29 suggests that the scenes of Fabius and of the defeat of Hasdrubal were in the adjacent *Sala della Lupa*.

¹²² The text is cited from Reineke (1996) 315.

¹²³ For verbal correspondences with Livy, see Reineke (1996) 263 n. 16.

of this episode at *Pun.* 12.541–732, since Livy describes only severe storms but no divine intervention (26.11):

En, quem sperabat detrudere rupe Tonantem
 Tarpeia, pluuias inopina grandine mixtas
 Intulit auxilium Poenosque referre coegit
 Signa retro ac uotum capiundae ponere Romae. (*Silua* 545–48)

Look, Jupiter the Thunderer, whom he hoped to dislodge from the Tarpeian rock, brought help, a sudden storm of mingled rain and hail, and forced the Carthaginians to retreat and lay aside their wish to take possession of Rome.

If this is so, we have here a telling indication that by the early sixteenth century Silius Italicus has been absorbed into the storehouse of knowledge of the literary history of the Punic wars, which are naturally given an important place in the celebration of ancient Roman heroism and morality upon the Capitol.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE RECEPTION OF SILIUS ITALICUS IN MODERN SCHOLARSHIP

William J. Dominik

The reception of Silius Italicus' *Punica* in modern scholarship is a phenomenon worthy of critical discussion since it reflects the changing nature of critical attitudes toward imperial literature generally through the twentieth century.¹ Scholars during the Renaissance and subsequent ages considered Silius to be an important poet, as is evident in the various editions and commentaries that appeared.² For much of the twentieth century, however, post-Virgilian epic was generally consigned to an inferior status, as reflected in its descriptive label "silver," and Silius Italicus came toward the end of the line of critical revaluation of imperial epic. One by one poets such as Ovid, Lucan, Statius, and Valerius Flaccus were subject to this revaluation during the course of the twentieth century and emerged as epicists worthy of serious attention in their own right. Silius Italicus was given relatively little serious scholarly attention until the latter part of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. Criticism of the *Punica* in some of the twentieth century often sometimes consisted of disparaging comments that did little to advance critical understanding of the epic. Silius Italicus received a more negative press than any other imperial epicist, as characterized by Butler's description of the *Punica* as "the longest and worst of the surviving Roman epics."³

Attitudes toward the *Punica* began to shift in the second half of the twentieth century, especially toward the end of the century, and a more favorable reception of the epic gradually emerged as the scholarship

¹ Regretfully I can only cite select books, articles and chapters here (due to limitations of space) to demonstrate the main trends in Silian scholarship. For a survey covering the last sixteen years of the twentieth century, see Ariemma (2000b). I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Matthew Matthias in assembling the material that appears in this chapter.

² See *CTC* 341–98.

³ Butler (1909) 236.

evolved and critical understanding of the epic increased. While a few critical voices appeared in the modern era that were prepared to appreciate Silius Italicus' epic on its own merits, it was not until the middle of the twentieth century that scholars began to treat the *Punica* as a serious epic worthy of major critical investigation. This renaissance of Silian studies began in England with the critical work of Bassett⁴ and in Germany with von Albrecht.⁵ These critics arguably had the biggest influence in encouraging scholars to examine the *Punica* in literary rather than predominantly philological terms. The importance of Bassett's articles and von Albrecht's monograph can be measured by the fact that they still serve as useful starting points for an investigation of the *Punica*. Since the advent of these critical studies a considerable amount of sensitive scholarship on Silius' epic has appeared. Nevertheless criticism in the last couple of decades of the twentieth century suffered from a lingering prejudice reflective of attitudes toward the *Punica* earlier in the century. Even some present critics do not regard the *Punica* highly. Scholarship since the turn of the twenty-first century, however, has generally tended to be more appreciative of the poet's aims and achievements.

1. *Early history of the text and editions*

Several scholars discuss the history of the transmission of the text of the *Punica*,⁶ from the time a single manuscript was found in the monastery at Saint Gall by Poggio Bracciolini, the papal secretary, during the Council of Constance (1417).⁷ This discussion has been dominated by two important manuscript issues. The first concerns the lost Codex *Coloniensis*: Summers and Delz point out that this manuscript was used by Renaissance and early modern scholars such as Francisco Modius, Daniel Heinsius, and Arnold Drakenborch, whose individual emendations survive.⁸ The second problem has been much more controver-

⁴ E.g., Bassett (1953), (1955), (1959), (1963), (1966).

⁵ E.g., von Albrecht (1964), including a comprehensive bibliography; (1968); (1991); (1999) 291–316.

⁶ E.g., McGushin (1985); Reeve (1983); *CTC* 341–98; Delz (1987) *Praefatio*.

⁷ For a possible reference to the *Punica* prior to its rediscovery, see Schieffler (1975). Petrarch's *Africa* is now accepted to have been written with no knowledge of the *Punica*; see, e.g., von Albrecht (1964) 118–44 and Muecke in this volume (402–3).

⁸ Summers (1902); Delz (1987) liv–lxiv.

sial among modern critics. Renaissance scholars identified a lacuna in the eighth book of the manuscript discovered by Poggio. This gap was filled by Jacob Constantius almost a century later in 1508 when he published 81 lines consisting of the famous story of Aeneas and Anna; he maintained that his teacher, Baptista Guarino, had acquired these from France.⁹ The 1523 edition of Aldo Manuzio was the first to include the passage (8.145–225), which some modern scholars consider to be genuine,¹⁰ though others believe them to be a late forgery.¹¹

Other manuscript issues of interest to modern scholars have been the *editio princeps* of the *Punica* by Sweynheim and Pannartz (1471); the dozens of subsequent editions and commentaries of the poem, including those of Marso (1492),¹² Asulano (1523), Heinsius (1600), Dausque (1615), Keller (1695), Drakenborch (1717), and Lefebvre de Villebrune (1781); the “lost” commentary of Calderini;¹³ Ernesti’s sometimes hostile and Ruperti’s generally sympathetic treatment (1791–92 and 1795–98 respectively); Lemaire’s *variorum* edition (1823), and the German editions of Lünemann (1824) and Bauer (1895) at each end of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ Several late nineteenth and early twentieth-century dissertations, books, and articles, the majority of them German, show the influence of *Altertumswissenschaft* by examining issues of philology,¹⁵ textual criticism,¹⁶ *Quellenforschung*,¹⁷ literary devices,¹⁸ and the dates of the *Punica*’s composition.¹⁹ These areas, particularly textual criticism,²⁰ continued to hold sway during the first half of the twentieth century. There are few modern translations of the entire

⁹ For the relevant passage, see Heitland (1896) 192; Delz (1987) lxx–lxxi.

¹⁰ E.g., Heitland (1896); Summers (1902) 171; Brugnoli and Santini (1995); Duckworth (1967b) 142 argues that the passage is genuine and bases his view on the meter of the lines, which he maintains are Silian in their patterns and in the arrangement of the spondees and dactyls. See also Ganiban (94 n. 68) and Keith (366 n. 37) in this volume.

¹¹ E.g., Delz (1987) lxiv–lxvii; Reeve (1989) 216; Reeve (1998).

¹² See also Muecke in this volume (411).

¹³ Muecke and Dunston (1998); Muecke (2005) and in this volume (414–18).

¹⁴ On the errors in Bauer’s Teubner text, see Delz (1987) v–vi. Bauer published several articles dealing with textual issues prior to the publication of his text; see Bauer (1883), (1888), (1889), (1891), (1892), (1893).

¹⁵ E.g., Clement (1899).

¹⁶ E.g., Blass (1867); Summers (1899) and (1900).

¹⁷ E.g., Cholevius (1865); Wezel (1873); Blass (1875); Groesst (1887).

¹⁸ E.g., Barchfeld (1880); Buchwald (1886); Lindblom (1906).

¹⁹ E.g., Bickel (1911).

²⁰ E.g., Shuster (1927) and (1942); Blomgren (1938).

Punica in comparison with most other Roman epics. In English there are the translations of Ross (1661),²¹ Tytler (1828), J. D. Duff (1934), and Wilson (1991);²² in French those of Nisard (1878) and Devallet, Martin, Miniconi, and Volpilhac-Lenthéric (1979–92); in Italian that of Occione (1889) and Vinchesi (2001), and in German that of Bothe (1855–57). Recent commentaries include those of Spaltenstein on the whole epic (1986–90), Feeney on book 1 (1982), Attia on book 6 (1955), Ariemma on book 8 (2000a), the partial commentaries of Goldman (1997) and Bennett (1978) on books 8 and 13 respectively, and Roosjen on book 14 (1996), while Fröhlich has written a partial commentary of book 6 with an interrelated interpretation and translation (2000). Commentaries by Matthias on book 3, Littlewood on book 7, van der Keur on book 13, and Klaassen on book 14 are in progress. Wacht (1989) has produced a useful concordance based on Delz's text.

2. *Life and politics of Silius Italicus*²³

An epigraphical discovery in the twentieth century in Asia revealed Silius' full name as Tiberius Catius Asconius Silius Italicus;²⁴ the discovery of the name Asconius led to speculation regarding the epicist's birthplace. Despite various suggestions, there is no clear evidence, and Silius' birthplace remains unknown. Hübner dismissed the possibility that Silius may have been born in Italica in Spain on the basis that his *cognomen* would be Italicensis.²⁵ Padua²⁶ and Capua²⁷ have been proposed as possible locations of his birth. Modern scholars have had an easier time reconstructing his career based mainly on Pliny's obituary notice (*Ep.* 3.7) and various poems by Martial (4.14, 6.64, 7.63, 8.66, 9.86, 11.48, 11.50). Although most scholars have read Pliny's criticism of Silius at face value, others have read an undertone of malice in it

²¹ See Daemen-de Gelder and Vander Motten (2008).

²² Wilson translates passages from *Punica* 1, 3, 4, 6, 12 and 17.

²³ For biographical details see also Augoustakis in this volume (5–6).

²⁴ Calder and Cormack (1962) 76, no. 411; cf. Calder (1935).

²⁵ Hübner (1875) 58.

²⁶ Campbell (1936); Chilver (1941) 109–11.

²⁷ Vessey (1984).

against Silius²⁸ and suggested that Pliny was jealous of Silius' success²⁹ or had been slighted by Silius.³⁰ Pomeroy paints a possible picture of Silius at home discussing with his small coterie issues of literary and philosophical interest.³¹

Modern scholarship has long considered Silius Italicus to be a Stoic writer.³² The consideration of whether or not Silius may have been a Stoic has naturally led to scholars searching for Stoic elements in the *Punica*.³³ In his examination of the importance of Hercules in the *Punica*, Bassett assumes that Silius follows Stoicism, though he admits that some the evidence is problematic.³⁴ He maintains that Hercules is a Stoic *sapiens* and Scipio one of his successors,³⁵ whereas Hannibal, who bears comparison with Hercules because of his favorable qualities, falls short of him in the final judgment.³⁶ Vessey also discusses Silius' treatment of Hercules and Hannibal respectively in Stoic terms.³⁷ Von Albrecht³⁸ and Kißel³⁹ present Silius as a Stoic poet-philosopher who explores various moral and ethical situations and qualities in his poem. Casale views the civic and moral purpose of the *Punica* from the perspective of the Stoic educative function of literature.⁴⁰ Even a recent scholar such as Ripoll ascribes a significant amount of Stoic philosophy to the characterization of Silius' heroes, for example, Hercules, who he argues is transformed from an ambivalent figure at the beginning of the *Punica* into a Roman Stoic at the close;⁴¹ this ascription is consistent with Ripoll's discussion of Silius' portrayal of fundamental

²⁸ E.g., Vessey (1974a) 116; Pomeroy (1989) 135 n. 4, observes of Pliny's claim that Silius was thought to have prosecuted on his own initiative under Nero (*Ep.* 7.3.3): "a piece of innuendo worthy of Tacitus."

²⁹ E.g., Matier (1989a) 3.

³⁰ E.g., McDermott and Orentzel (1977) 32.

³¹ Pomeroy (1989) 119–21.

³² E.g., Mendell (1924) 100–2; Duff (1927) 464–65; Schanz and Hosius (1935) 527; Syme (1958) 2:538.

³³ E.g., Liebeschuetz (1979) 169–79, especially 169–70; Billerbeck (1986a) and (1986b), especially 3134–43; Danesi-Marioni (1989); Matier (1990); Rocca-Serra (1990).

³⁴ Bassett (1966) 262–64.

³⁵ Bassett (1966) 270.

³⁶ Bassett (1966) 266–69, especially 268.

³⁷ Vessey (1974b) and (1982a).

³⁸ von Albrecht (1964).

³⁹ Kißel (1979).

⁴⁰ Casale (1954) 11–45.

⁴¹ E.g., Ripoll (1998a) 112–32.

values and ethical themes in the epic. Other recent scholars generally are more circumspect in regard to Silius' alleged Stoicism,⁴² with some expressing ambivalence⁴³ and others dismissing the possibility of Silius being a Stoic.⁴⁴

Given the political and social context in which Silius Italicus composed his works and the fact that he lived under a dozen emperors from Tiberius to Trajan,⁴⁵ it is scarcely surprising that Silius' relationships with the various emperors should emerge as a scholarly subject of discussion. Unfortunately no substantial work on Silius' relationships with the emperors prior to Domitian exists. What is known is that he was a consul at the time of Nero's downfall in AD 68 and supported Vitellius prior to Vespasian's accession late the following year. But he survived and even seemed to flourish under the Flavian dispensation until he committed suicide under Trajan in AD 101 apparently, according to Pliny, because of *clavus* (*Ep.* 3.7.1–2), a malady that has been interpreted variously by modern commentators.⁴⁶ Despite these details, there is no substantial discussion of Silius' relationships with the emperors prior to the reign of Domitian. From the time of the discovery of the manuscript by Poggio, mainstream scholarship generally believed that Silius was broadly supportive of Domitian and that the *Punica* reflects his admiration for the emperor. Modern scholars have continued to follow this line, with some arguing that the *Punica* was a celebration of the imperial project.⁴⁷ An especially strong exposition of this view is made by McDermott and Orentzel, who argue largely on the basis of two passages (3.607–29; 14.686–88) that Silius was a steadfast supporter of Domitian⁴⁸ and that the epicist respected and

⁴² E.g., Burck (1984a) 72 n. 296, 122.

⁴³ E.g., Dihle (1994) 176: "Silius was a Stoic, too: or at least, he was influenced by Stoic thinking."

⁴⁴ E.g., McGuire (1985) 5. On the two opposing views, see also Asso (179–92) and Tipping (193–218) in this volume.

⁴⁵ For recent discussions of the context of the prevalence of political discourse in imperial literature and the general political and social background under which Roman writers, including Silius, composed their works, see respectively Dominik, Garthwaite, and Roche, (2009) 1–21; Rutledge (2009) 23–61.

⁴⁶ E.g., Westcott (1899) 181: "a hard tumor; sometimes a 'corn' or 'callus'"; Merrill (1903) 280: "[p]erhaps some sort an ulcer." Cf. Duff (1934) 1:10: "the name that modern medical science would give to this affliction is uncertain"; Sherwin-White (1966) 227: "whatever the trouble, neither [the younger or older] Pliny meant internal ulcers."

⁴⁷ Liebeschuetz (1979) 167–80, especially 168.

⁴⁸ McDermott and Orentzel (1977) 24–34, especially 27–31; see also Taisne (1992).

admired the emperor.⁴⁹ Despite the fact that it was customary, even necessary, for an imperial poet to include an expression of support for his emperor in his poetry, especially an epic—indeed Domitian supposedly took offence against those did not eulogize him (D.C. 67.4.2; cf. Plin. *Pan.* 1.6)—McDermott and Orentzel maintain that Silius' sincerity is proven since Silius could have ignored Domitian completely, had he wished to do so.⁵⁰ Among recent scholars Ripoll maintains on biographical grounds that Silius supported Domitian,⁵¹ while Marks is particularly circumspect regarding Silius' attitudes to Domitian and the principate.⁵²

3. *Modern reception and criticism*

The vast majority of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars were hostile to the *Punica*. This is seen most clearly in the general surveys of Latin literature produced during this time. This attitude is a definite strand in the history of Silius' reception, going back through Macaulay⁵³ and Gibbon⁵⁴ to Scaliger⁵⁵ and ultimately to Pliny (3.7). Pliny's comment in his obituary that Silius composed with more *cura* ("care") than *ingenium* ("talent") has exerted strong influence over scholars from the time of the *Punica*'s rediscovery by Poggio. Although there has been the occasional scholar who has challenged Pliny's bald assessment⁵⁶ or interpreted it as being vengeful and malicious,⁵⁷ as noted above, Pliny's obituary of Silius has often been cited as evidence of Silius' alleged lack of literary gifts and his derivative composition. Browne,⁵⁸ Duff⁵⁹

⁴⁹ McDermott and Orentzel (1977) 24.

⁵⁰ McDermott and Orentzel (1977) 34.

⁵¹ Ripoll (1998a) 469–71.

⁵² Marks (2005a) 286: "Whether Silius was pro- or anti-Flavian, pro- or anti-Domitian I do not know."

⁵³ Macaulay (1894) 55: "The folly of Silius Italicus... is positively nauseous."

⁵⁴ Gibbon praises Silius' style and descriptions but essentially maintains that he was not equal to his poetic task and that he slavishly followed Virgil; see Sheffield (1796) 81–83.

⁵⁵ Scaliger (1561) 324: *quem equidem postremum bonorum existimo; quin ne poetam quidem* ("whom, for my part, I consider to be the worst of the good poets, rather, not even a poet").

⁵⁶ E.g., Newman (1986) 230–32, especially 230: "Yet there is *ingenium* in the poem. Silius' talent is proved by individual lines, as well as by continuous passages."

⁵⁷ E.g., Matier (1988) 16 and (1989a) 2–3.

⁵⁸ Browne (1853) 438–39.

⁵⁹ Duff (1927) 454.

and Laidlaw,⁶⁰ for example, immediately follow their remarks about Silius' diligence and lack of inspiration as a poet with Pliny's similar comments as evidence for their views. Summers⁶¹ and Louage⁶² cite Pliny's remarks first to provide fodder for their subsequent disparagement of Silius and his poem; so does Rose, who refers to the *Punica* as "intolerable" and asserts that the poet possessed "absolutely no talent or taste (as the stupid unreality of those episodes which he invents indicates)."⁶³ Laudizi maintains that Pliny's comment is more of an objective judgment than it is a criticism,⁶⁴ while Nauta perceptively observes that Pliny portrays himself similarly by advocating *studium* ("zeal") and *labor* ("labor") over *ingenium*, which suggests that Pliny's comment may not be as critical as it perhaps seems,⁶⁵ but it is important to note that the rhetorician does praise the talents of other poets. Some critics have taken Pliny's judgment of Silius seriously, with even a recent scholar such as Gagliardi defending it and arguing against the revaluation of a poet "senza estro e senza smalto."⁶⁶ There has been a tendency to attribute Martial's positive appraisal of Silius (4.14, 6.64, 7.63, 8.66, 9.86, 11.48, 11.49), including his comparison of the Flavian epic poet with Virgil (4.14), to mercenary intent⁶⁷ or to downplay or even ignore it, as in the case of Crutwell, who merely notes the praise without commenting upon it, thereby effectively dismissing its import.⁶⁸ Yet other critics have impugned Martial's motives, for example, Dudley, who asserts that the epigrammatist's desire to praise distorted his literary perspicacity.⁶⁹

Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars are seemingly unstinting in their criticism of Silius and his epic. Both Browne⁷⁰ and Louage⁷¹ describe the *Punica* verbatim as "the dullest and most tedious poem in the Latin language," while Crutwell refers to Silius as a "poetaster" and a "laborious compiler and tasteless versifier."⁷² Baud-

⁶⁰ Laidlaw (1951) 142.

⁶¹ Summers (1920) 53.

⁶² Louage (1873) 195.

⁶³ Rose (1936) 391.

⁶⁴ Laudizi (1989) 19–26.

⁶⁵ Nauta (2002) 149–51, especially 149.

⁶⁶ Gagliardi (1990) 293.

⁶⁷ Wallace (1955) 2–3; Vessey (1974a) 110.

⁶⁸ Crutwell (1877) 467.

⁶⁹ Dudley (1972) 265.

⁷⁰ Browne (1853) 438–39.

⁷¹ Louage (1873) 195.

⁷² Crutwell (1877) 466.

nik describes Silius as a “geradezu sklavischer Nachahmer” of Homer and Virgil.⁷³ Mackail complains that the subject matter is ill-suited to the epic genre and contends that Silius is the supreme illustration of the “incorrigible amateur.” He also considers the poem to be possibly the “worst epic ever written” and deserving of its fall into oblivion.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the criticism of its silence allegedly as a reflection of its poetic worth, as Mendell notes,⁷⁵ could be applied to any number of other works by imperial and republican poets who were seldom mentioned by their contemporaries or subsequent generations. Pichon dubs Silius a “classique” writer in the pejorative sense.⁷⁶ Hosius describes Silius’ poetry as “mittelmäßig, den er selbst hat nichts.”⁷⁷ Even when scholars praise Silius, they usually do so in a backhanded or muted fashion and within the larger context of disparaging him and his epic,⁷⁸ sometimes even in the same breath, as in the case of Ellis, who describes Silius as “not an interesting poet, except here and there.”⁷⁹ Butler employs a similar rhetoric to MacKail but is slightly more even-handed, for at least he credits Silius with some degree of skill in the form and composition of the poem.⁸⁰ As with other scholars of the period, Butler’s principal complaint is that Silius relies heavily on elements drawn from previous epic, especially Virgil,⁸¹ a criticism rendered impotent by later twentieth-century advances in the understanding of the workings of genre. Butler⁸² and Simcox⁸³ criticize Silius for his use of myth and divine machinery in a historical epic, a view subsequently challenged by Mendell.⁸⁴ A more common criticism leveled against Silius among scholars such as Butler⁸⁵ and Duff⁸⁶ is that of allegedly weak characterization. A dismissive attitude toward Silius is exemplified by Norden,

⁷³ Baudnik (1906) 1.

⁷⁴ Mackail (1895) 191–92.

⁷⁵ E.g., Mendell (1924) 94.

⁷⁶ Pichon (1908) 586.

⁷⁷ Schanz and Hosius (1935) 529.

⁷⁸ E.g., Louage (1873) 195; Mendell (1924) 92–106, especially 93 and 105; Rose (1936) 391.

⁷⁹ Ellis (1889) 370.

⁸⁰ Butler (1909) 236–50.

⁸¹ Butler (1909) 240.

⁸² Butler (1909) 239.

⁸³ Simcox (1883) 2:66.

⁸⁴ Mendell (1924) 105–6.

⁸⁵ Butler (1909) 242.

⁸⁶ Duff (1927) 463.

who only mentions Silius to highlight his “Stumpfheit” in comparison with the talent of Lucan.⁸⁷

The subjectivity of such hostile views, as Bassett points out, is apparent in Silius’ popularity before the Victorian age,⁸⁸ which is reflected in the publication of the numerous editions of the *Punica*. During the Elizabethan period Silius was held in particularly high esteem. Webbe considers him along with Lucan as historical poets “no lesse profitable then delightsome to bee read.”⁸⁹ Some modern scholars writing about this period, however, are critical of the esteem Silius enjoyed in England. Meres, for instance, included Silius in his sixteenth-century list of the greatest Latin authors alongside Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Lucan, Lucretius, Ausonius, and Claudian,⁹⁰ but Curtius wryly comments: “By no means a happy addition.”⁹¹ The epic was recommended as a school text by sixteenth-century humanists such as Vives⁹² and Elyot⁹³ and used as a model by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century poets such as Addison (1705 and 1721) and Gray.⁹⁴ Tytler considers the *Punica*, with its “style of elegant poetry, to be superior to the poems of Lucan, Statius, and Valerius Flaccus.”⁹⁵ During the Victorian era a derogative view of Silius gained a foothold in the scholarly community that affected subsequent criticism of the poet in the twentieth century. Nonetheless more sympathetic responses of his epic emerged even during the early part of the century. J. D. Duff attributed the superficiality of the prevailing judgment of the *Punica* to its unfamiliarity among scholars.⁹⁶ Asserting that reading the epic was a pleasurable activity, Duff further maintained that if Ovid had written the description of Pan (13.326–47), every scholar would be acquainted with these lines and critics would praise them.⁹⁷ Although Owen considers Silius not to be a “great poet,” he strikes an even more favorable tone in his assessment of Silius by objecting to what he views as the unfair criticism of

⁸⁷ Norden (1954) 83.

⁸⁸ Bassett (1953) 155–68.

⁸⁹ Webbe (1586) 29.

⁹⁰ Meres (1598).

⁹¹ Curtius (1953) 263.

⁹² Juan Luis Vives, *De Ratione Studii Puerilis Epistolae Duae* (1523) in Mayans (1782) 269.

⁹³ Elyot (1531) 60–61.

⁹⁴ Thomas Gray, *Notes of Travel* in Tovey (1890) 225–27.

⁹⁵ Tytler (1828) xiii–xiv.

⁹⁶ Duff (1934) 1:xii–xiii.

⁹⁷ Duff (1934) 1:xiv.

Silius before he draws attention to the skilful arrangement of the narrative, the realism of his descriptions, and to the sublimity and vigor of his expression.⁹⁸ Mendell, though ambivalent about the quality of the *Punica*, essentially mounts a defense of the epic by comparing it in somewhat dispassionate terms with Homer and the epics of Ennius, Virgil, Lucan, and Statius;⁹⁹ this is an approach worthy of particular attention given the view of Mackail¹⁰⁰ and Butler¹⁰¹ of the *Punica* as being the lowest in rank among Roman epics. Another approach to Silius during the early to mid-twentieth century is exemplified by Steele, whose heavily philological discussion of the poet is unaccompanied by any subjective remarks whatsoever.¹⁰² Although this critical stance is rare, it is perhaps the forerunner of more recent approaches to Silius that place a premium on critical analysis of the *Punica* on its own merits rather than on the opinions of past critics or on their own literary tastes—or that at least studiously desist from drawing blatant value judgments, as in the case of Küppers.¹⁰³

A negative view of Silius is still held today in many quarters of the scholarly community. This is reflected in the comments of Feeney, who contends that Silius is “a quite remarkably bad poet, on virtually every count and according to virtually every authority,”¹⁰⁴ an opinion reminiscent of an earlier reference by Wallace to the “unanimous agreement as to his mediocrity.”¹⁰⁵ Tandoi and Delz similarly describe Silius as a mediocre poet, the former adding that he is “senza personalità.”¹⁰⁶ Feeney even attributes the survival of only the second historical epic of Roman literature to “capricious Fortune”¹⁰⁷ instead of to late antique and unknown medieval scholars, without whom it could not have survived until its so-called “rediscovery” in the Renaissance. Naturally this type of prejudice affects scholars’ own discussion of their topics, as in the case of Feeney, who begins his examination of the gods in Silius’ epic by declaring unapologetically that his

⁹⁸ Owen (1909) 254.

⁹⁹ Mendell (1924) 92–106.

¹⁰⁰ Mackail (1895) 191.

¹⁰¹ Butler (1909) 236.

¹⁰² Steele (1922) and (1930).

¹⁰³ Küppers (1986) 175.

¹⁰⁴ Feeney (1991) 251; cf. Feeney (1986b) 141: “Silius’s stock is so low...”.

¹⁰⁵ Wallace (1955) 1.

¹⁰⁶ Tandoi (1985) 160; Delz (1987) v.

¹⁰⁷ Feeney (1991) 302.

“own judgment of the *Punica* will prove to be as severe as that of any other critic.”¹⁰⁸ Although Feeney asserts that Silius’ gods fail utterly on their own terms, he attributes this failure to “the large-scale enervation which dooms the work as a whole,”¹⁰⁹ thereby implicating his own judgment of the divine action in the *Punica*. Just as Pliny’s comment continues to affect the perception of Silius in the scholarly community, there is a tendency even for the most recent commentators to allow themselves to be influenced by previous criticism of Silius. An illustration of this is reflected in the recent view of Rutherford, who cites Feeney’s opinion as partial justification for his own negative appraisal of Silius.¹¹⁰ Another example is the judgment of Wallace, who follows in the path of earlier critics such as Mackail and Butler by pronouncing Silius as “undoubtedly one of the less-gifted writers of what has been termed ‘The Silver Age of Latin Literature.’”¹¹¹ In his school edition of *Silver Latin Epic*—the continuing use of the phrase itself a value judgment on Flavian epic passed on to successive generations of students—Currie concedes a “certain dignity” to Silius and praises his “few effective aphorisms” and “pleasing touch of the romantic,” but he criticizes his lack of originality and “imaginative power.”¹¹² In one of his commentaries on the *Aeneid*, Austin refers to a “near-comic” imitation of a Virgilian passage in Silius’ *Punica*, a passage that he describes as “a model example of the grotesque banalities of Silius’ cardboard epic.”¹¹³ Other recent criticisms of Silius repeat the standard disparagement of his characterization,¹¹⁴ his use of the gods,¹¹⁵ and the length of his poem.¹¹⁶ One of the more positive critics of Silius is Wallace who, following directly in the footsteps of Duff,¹¹⁷ praises Silius’ style but not before attributing its alleged lack of vigor to old age.¹¹⁸ Laudizi provides a rare voice of overt praise in his reference to

¹⁰⁸ Feeney (1901) 302.

¹⁰⁹ Feeney (1901) 302.

¹¹⁰ Rutherford (2005) 48.

¹¹¹ Wallace (1955) 1.

¹¹² Currie (1985) xviii, xxiii, xxvi, and xxx.

¹¹³ Austin (1964) 235 on *Aen.* 2.608ff. and *Pun.* 12.703ff.

¹¹⁴ Toohey (1992) 210 on Scipio.

¹¹⁵ E.g., Gossage (1969) 77; Miniconi and Devallet (1979) lxviii; Vessey (1982b) 591; Rutherford (2005) 48; *contra* Matier (1981) 142.

¹¹⁶ E.g., Wallace (1955) vi.

¹¹⁷ Duff (1934) 1:xiii–xvi.

¹¹⁸ Wallace (1955) 281, 292–94.

the “genio poetico di Silio.”¹¹⁹ The staunchest defender of Silius as a poet has been Matier,¹²⁰ who mounted a rearguard action against the type of criticism that prevailed for most of the twentieth century, but even he maintains that some sections of the *Punica* consist “of unrelieved monotony” and are “very tedious” in their moralizing stance,¹²¹ comments reminiscent of the type of subjective opinions of critics he himself challenges.¹²²

The worst excesses of the rhetorical demolition of Silius are presently, as in the early to mid-twentieth century, confined to general surveys. The specific criticisms leveled against Silius are much the same, as in the case of Gossage, who refers to the poet as an imitator (the use of this word and its variants is itself a value judgment) and to the *Punica* as an “anachronistic imitation,”¹²³ and Vessey, who takes Pliny’s criticism at his literal word¹²⁴ and calls Silius a “leviathan,” chastising him for the length of his poem.¹²⁵ When Vessey praises the *Punica*, it is often faint, as in his reference to much of the poem as being “not despicable”;¹²⁶ when praise of a particular passage occurs, for example, the description of Pan (13.326–47), it seems derived from previous praise and is accompanied by the usual criticism of it being an exception to Silius’ deficiencies as a poet;¹²⁷ and when he praises Silius’ characterization, as in the case of Hannibal, it is attributed at least partly to happenstance.¹²⁸ Feeney, as noted above, is particularly severe in his criticism of the *Punica*, but then proceeds to praise Silius’ erudition, organizational skills, diction, occasional wit, and ethical concerns.¹²⁹ Other surveys published in England and America, though not as rhetorically scathing of Silius and his poem, are no less disparaging in their assessment by portraying the Flavian poet as a mere literary

¹¹⁹ Laudizi (1989) 24.

¹²⁰ Matier (1981), (1988), and (1989a).

¹²¹ Matier (1988) 17 and (1989a) 7.

¹²² E.g., Butler (1909) 195, who refers to Silius’ “dull monotony” and “dull” wit; cf. Matier (1989a) 4, who cites Butler’s opinion of Silius as evidence of the “hostility and malice” of critics against Silius.

¹²³ Gossage (1969) 68 and 88.

¹²⁴ Vessey (1982b) 595: “In Pliny’s terms, there was an absence of sustained *ingenium*.”

¹²⁵ Vessey (1982b) 591.

¹²⁶ Vessey (1982b) 558.

¹²⁷ Vessey (1982b) 593–95; see above, n. 97.

¹²⁸ Vessey (1982b) 595.

¹²⁹ Feeney (1991) 302–3.

dilettante and retiree. This tradition here is strong even in recent surveys of the last quarter century. Newman constructs a picture of Silius as a “kindly Roman amateur of letters, busy with trivialities...and always in his head a vacuum.”¹³⁰ Toohey constructs a similar picture by entitling his discussion of Silius with the phrase “Going Through the Motions” and then declaring that Silius “was not a literary person.”¹³¹ Taplin does the same with his heading “Silius and the Poetry of Retirement” and with his conclusion that the *Punica* “collects poets and orators as he himself did in life.”¹³² An implied value judgment of Silius regarding his relative importance in the canon of classical authors is suggested by the lack of detailed discussion of the *Punica* in some recent surveys and general discussions of classical and Latin literature, where he is conspicuous mainly through his relative (or complete) absence.¹³³

This deprecatory attitude is mirrored in some ambivalent treatments in Italian and German surveys. Conte refers to the “splendid representations” of various heroes in the *Punica* but holds that the epic is a “frigid gallery of historical busts and antiquarian curiosities”, that certain scenes are “not always successful,” that the epic does not add “much that is new,” and that Silius’ *Nachleben* did not greatly exceed “his merits.”¹³⁴ Dihle contends that the narrative and descriptive details of the *Punica* “produce a fairly crude effect.”¹³⁵ As in Anglo-American scholarship,¹³⁶ Silius’ style is sometimes attributed to senescence, as in two surveys of von Albrecht, in one of which under the heading “The Serenity of Old Age” he asserts that “Silius captures his readers not by brilliance but by simplicity,”¹³⁷ though a little earlier he praises the originality of the structure of the *Punica*.¹³⁸ Whereas von Albrecht maintains in another survey that Silius “skillfully” uses elements of previous epic and that his “versification has been blamed unjustly,” he describes Silius’ expression as sometimes reflecting “the even temper

¹³⁰ Newman (1986) 232.

¹³¹ Toohey (1992) 203.

¹³² Taplin (2001) 194 and 199.

¹³³ E.g., Hainsworth (1991); Fantham (1996); Bloomer (1997); Braund (2002); Sharrock and Ash (2002); Rutherford (2005). The omission of Silius from Dominik, Garthwaite, and Roche (2009) is due to the non-delivery of a chapter.

¹³⁴ Conte (1994) 492, 494–95.

¹³⁵ Dihle (1994) 196.

¹³⁶ Wallace (1955) 281, 292–94; Duff (1934) 1:xiii–xvi.

¹³⁷ von Albrecht (1999) 296.

¹³⁸ von Albrecht (1999) 294–95, especially 295.

of old age,” with its consequences as being “not exclusively negative,” and avers that the poet “certainly does not distract us from his subject by giving it a glittering surface.”¹³⁹

Exceptions to the generally unconstructive attitude of scholars toward Silius in their surveys include Burck, Hutchinson, Wilson, and Marks. Burck provides an overview of the major issues concerning Silian scholarship in the late 1970s, including the chronology of the *Punica* and choice of subject, its intertextual relationship with Livy’s history, its structure and contents, the role of its gods, overall meaning, and narrative style.¹⁴⁰ Hutchinson discusses at various points the positive effects of Silius’ style, language, characterization, and descriptions; his use of the gods, myth, and history; and the intertextuality of the *Punica* with Livy, Vergil, Lucan, Statius, and Tacitus.¹⁴¹ Wilson argues in detail for Silius’ mythologizing and anti-historical perspective on the Second Punic War through his use of traditional epic features, such as a divine framework, aetiological explanations, dreams, omens, and prophecies¹⁴²—in short, those traits often criticized by scholars for their use in a “historical” epic.¹⁴³ Finally, Marks provides a neat overview of the *Punica* and the scholarly issues surrounding its reception.¹⁴⁴

Scholars of the *Punica* during the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century focused mainly upon *Quellenforschung* and source analysis, especially historical sources,¹⁴⁵ specifically Livy,¹⁴⁶ and the dates of the *Punica*’s composition.¹⁴⁷ Nicol (1936) was deeply indebted to these scholars in his monograph on the historical and geographical sources for the poem. Most of his discussion deals with Silius’ usage of Livy and puts forward other potential historical sources before he moves on to examine geography. The tendency of these philologists, including Nicol, was to stretch the boundaries to the point of suggesting that Silius was merely copying material from his sources. Scholars during this time also examined the influence of poetic sources upon Silius’ composition of the *Punica*. The influence of Virgil upon Silius

¹³⁹ von Albrecht (1997) 2:963 and 966–67.

¹⁴⁰ Burck (1979).

¹⁴¹ Hutchinson (1993) 71–72, 90–92, 119–21, 201–7, and 289–94.

¹⁴² Wilson (1993).

¹⁴³ See above, nn. 80, 81, and 109.

¹⁴⁴ Marks (2005c) 528–37.

¹⁴⁵ E.g., Schlichteisen (1881); Klotz (1933).

¹⁴⁶ E.g., Kerer (1880–81); Bauer (1883) 103–60.

¹⁴⁷ E.g., Cartault (1887).

was the main focus,¹⁴⁸ but the intertextuality of the *Punica* with the works of Ennius,¹⁴⁹ Lucan,¹⁵⁰ Statius¹⁵¹ and other poets was also of considerable interest.¹⁵²

4. *Recent criticism and trends*

From the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century interest in Silius Italicus increased, particularly toward the end of the century and the start of the twenty-first century when an increasing amount of constructive and sophisticated criticism on the *Punica* was published. Textual criticism,¹⁵³ *Quellenforschung*, and source analysis¹⁵⁴ continued to be an important focus of Silian scholarship, as did the dating of the *Punica*.¹⁵⁵ Narrative features, such as the speeches¹⁵⁶ and the depiction of Roman defeats,¹⁵⁷ also attracted considerable attention, as did the “architecture” of the text,¹⁵⁸ its similes,¹⁵⁹ and the meter;¹⁶⁰ the speeches and the *Punica*’s architecture had also been of interest before the middle of the century.¹⁶¹ Wistrand usefully investigates possible references to contemporary historical events in the epic, but his conclusion that Silius produced a book annually in imitation of other poets, including Virgil, presumes an orderliness on the part of Roman poets that defies the complex process of poetic composition.¹⁶² A number of studies on intertextuality were written that built upon the works of previous scholars who analyzed Silius’ usage of past

¹⁴⁸ Barchfeld (1880) 20–33; Groesst (1887); Ussani (1950a) 88–171 and (1950b).

¹⁴⁹ Woodruff (1910); Fürstenau (1916).

¹⁵⁰ Steele (1922) 326–30; Meyer (1924).

¹⁵¹ Legras (1905); cf. Steele (1930).

¹⁵² Klotz (1927) 82–91 and (1933); Wezel (1873); Blass (1874); Heynacher (1877); Baudnik (1906); Streich (1913).

¹⁵³ E.g., Shackleton Bailey (1959); Ker (1967); Håkanson (1976); Watt (1984) 154–57, (1985), (1988); Courtney (1989).

¹⁵⁴ E.g., Cowherd (1972).

¹⁵⁵ E.g., Laudizi (1989) 29–54.

¹⁵⁶ E.g., Lundström (1971); Helzle (1996) 231–300.

¹⁵⁷ Niemann (1975).

¹⁵⁸ E.g., Wallace (1955) 177–84 and (1958).

¹⁵⁹ E.g., Matier (1986).

¹⁶⁰ Duckworth (1967b) 88–109; Frank (1970).

¹⁶¹ E.g., Loesch (1927) 81–93; Martin (1946).

¹⁶² Wistrand (1956) 58–60.

historians and poets. In addition to Ennius,¹⁶³ Livy,¹⁶⁴ Virgil,¹⁶⁵ Lucan¹⁶⁶ and Statius,¹⁶⁷ the main focus of scholars in the first half of the century, scholars also discuss the relationship between Silius and Homer,¹⁶⁸ Cicero,¹⁶⁹ Horace,¹⁷⁰ Ovid,¹⁷¹ Manilius,¹⁷² Flavius Josephus,¹⁷³ Valerius Flaccus,¹⁷⁴ Petrarch¹⁷⁵ and other writers.¹⁷⁶ The most extensive work is that of Juhnke (1972), who explores the intertextuality of the *Punica* and the Homeric epics, though Häußler¹⁷⁷ and Küppers¹⁷⁸ point out how it argues too pervasively for Homeric borrowing at the expense of the obvious mediating influence of Virgil's works. The intertextual studies that particularly advance Silian scholarship are those that do not just identify scenes in the *Punica* that are derived from historical and poetic sources, as is characteristic of those written in the first half of the twentieth century, but rather attempt to explain what the significance of these source passages is for a heightened appreciation of

¹⁶³ Pinto (1953); Wallace (1955) 62–72; Bettini (1977); Matier (1991); Runchina (1982); Jocelyn (1988); Casali (2006); Dorfbauer (2008).

¹⁶⁴ Sechi (1951); Wallace (1955) 12–61; von Albrecht (1964) 15–89; Romano (1969); Venini (1972a) and (1972b); Matier (1981); Danesi-Marioni (1986); Taisne (1994); see also Pomeroy (27–45) and Gibson (47–72) in this volume.

¹⁶⁵ Wallace (1955) 78–186; von Albrecht (1964) 20–24 and 166–89; Gossage (1969); Bettini (1976–77); Kießel (1979) 197–208; Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2493–501; Hardie (1993a) 38–40, 69–71, 81–83, 113–16; Pomeroy (2000); Klaassen (2005); see also Ganiban (73–98) and Klaassen (99–126) in this volume.

¹⁶⁶ Wallace (1955) 195–200; Currie (1958); Häussler (1978); Brouwers (1982); Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2501–4 and 2511–19; Fucecchi (1999); Ripoll (2000a); see also Marks in this volume (127–53).

¹⁶⁷ Wallace (1955) 206–8; Lorenz (1968); Venini (1969); Smolenaars (1996); see also Lovatt in this volume (155–76).

¹⁶⁸ Wallace (1955) 187–94; Juhnke (1972) 13–24, 44–50, 185–226, 235–67, and 280–303; Ripoll (2001); see also Klaassen in this volume (99–126).

¹⁶⁹ Heck (1970); Ripoll (2000b).

¹⁷⁰ Martin (1990); Williams (2004).

¹⁷¹ Bruère (1958) and (1959); von Albrecht (1968); Wilson (2004).

¹⁷² Rocca-Serra (1990).

¹⁷³ Ruprecht (1995).

¹⁷⁴ Frank (1974); Smolenaars (1996); Ripoll (1999).

¹⁷⁵ von Albrecht (1964) 118–44; Santini (1993); ter Haar (1997).

¹⁷⁶ Bruère (1952); Wallace (1955) 72–76, 201–6, and 208–9; Bassett (1959); von Albrecht (1964) 15–16 and 86–89; Häußler (1978) 148–67, 176–77, and 183–84; Miniconi and Devallet (1979) xxxix–l; Matier (1983); Schwarte (1983) 13–17 and 28–36; Küppers (1986) 107–25; Nesselrath (1986); Spaltenstein (1986) xiv–xx; Fletcher (1988); Devallet (1990); Fucecchi (1990a) and (1990b); Tedeschi (1994); Fowler (1997a) 20–23.

¹⁷⁷ Häußler (1976) 148 n. 2.

¹⁷⁸ Küppers (1986) 147 n. 578.

Silius' epic as, for example, in the studies of Ahl, Pomeroy, and Davis (1986) and Wilson (2004).

From the 1950s onward critics concentrated less on philological matters. One of the first modern champions of Silius Italicus was Edward Bassett, who examined the reception of the *Punica* between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries,¹⁷⁹ then proceeded in a series of articles to demonstrate Silius' skill in developing multiple allusions to his literary models.¹⁸⁰ Von Albrecht is a pioneer of modern Silian scholarship on account of his treatment of the *Punica* on a purely literary level. Von Albrecht's concern throughout his 1964 monograph is to show Silius' considerable *cura* and *ingenium*, for example, in his creative adaptation of Virgil,¹⁸¹ his use of similes,¹⁸² and his establishment of themes and motifs in the first book that are picked up later in the epic.¹⁸³ The single most important result of Bassett's and von Albrecht's studies was the shift in Silian scholarship to look more at the poem *qua* a poem, that is, with less emphasis on philological issues and *Quellenforschung*. The divine machinery and mythological and religious features of the *Punica* (along with their religious and political implications)¹⁸⁴ have interested scholars, as in the first half of the century,¹⁸⁵ with Jupiter,¹⁸⁶ Juno,¹⁸⁷ the Furies,¹⁸⁸ the *nekyia*,¹⁸⁹ the afterlife,¹⁹⁰ the ghosts of the deceased,¹⁹¹ dreams,¹⁹² funerary rites,¹⁹³ and the *devotio*¹⁹⁴ attracting special attention. Another area of scholarly interest has been Silius' use of time in the *Punica*.¹⁹⁵

¹⁷⁹ Bassett (1953).

¹⁸⁰ See above, n. 4.

¹⁸¹ von Albrecht (1964) 20–24, 166–89.

¹⁸² von Albrecht (1964) 90–118, 192–94.

¹⁸³ E.g., von Albrecht (1964) 34–35: Hannibal under the onslaught of Jupiter before the gates of Saguntum (1.252–55) and Rome (12.610–26).

¹⁸⁴ E.g., Liebeschuetz (1979) 167–80.

¹⁸⁵ E.g., Baudnik (1906) 29–38; Maubert (1928); De Luca (1937).

¹⁸⁶ Schubert (1984) 45–70 and *passim*; Feeney (1991) 301–12.

¹⁸⁷ Ramaglia (1952–53); Delz (1969); Laudizi (1989) 73–92.

¹⁸⁸ Thuile (1980) 229–323.

¹⁸⁹ Wallace (1955) 116–38; Reitz (1982); see also Klaassen (113–26) and Tipping (203–9) in this volume.

¹⁹⁰ Ramaglia (1954).

¹⁹¹ Bernstein (2000) 179–240.

¹⁹² Grillone (1967) 119–38; de Bustamente (1985); Bouquet (2001) 130–64.

¹⁹³ Devallet (1990).

¹⁹⁴ Marks (2005b).

¹⁹⁵ Wallace (1955) 227–33 and (1968); Venini (1972a).

In the various studies of the *Punica*'s characters, one of the issues that has preoccupied critics is which character qualifies as the hero of the *Punica*,¹⁹⁶ a concern of scholars earlier in the century. Scipio,¹⁹⁷ Hannibal,¹⁹⁸ Fabius,¹⁹⁹ and Rome²⁰⁰ (or the glory of Rome)²⁰¹ in conjunction with Roman *Fides*,²⁰² have all been suggested as the hero of the *Punica*; some scholars, however, maintain there is no single hero²⁰³ but rather a multiplicity of heroes,²⁰⁴ including the aforementioned figures and concepts, as well as Hercules, Regulus, and the Romans collectively.²⁰⁵ Until recently a conspicuous feature of the various discussions of the characters of the *Punica* has been the marginal treatment of women. In his investigations into the role of female figures in the *Punica*, Augoustakis demonstrates that Silius' women emerge from an anonymous position in the narrative to assume an essential role together with their male counterparts in the action of the poem.²⁰⁶ In political terms, Augoustakis contends that Virgil's female characters undercut the note of Augustan triumphalism in the *Aeneid*, whereas Silius' females reinforce the male perspective.²⁰⁷ Dietrich argues that Silius links female lamentation closely with the fortunes of Rome by emphasizing this voice in the events leading to the battle of Cannae and then removing it from the second half of the epic.²⁰⁸ She also shows how Silius rewrites Virgil and Ovid in the story of Dido in *Punica* 8²⁰⁹ and links Anna, a Carthaginian with an Italian past, with the worst violence of the second Punic war representing the fulfillment

¹⁹⁶ E.g., Duff (1934) 1:xi (Hannibal).

¹⁹⁷ E.g., Bassett (1966) 259; Kißel (1979) 128–53, especially 149 and 217–18.

¹⁹⁸ E.g., Casale (1954) 88; Matier (1989b); Conte (1994) 494.

¹⁹⁹ E.g., Sechi (1951) 285; Butler (1909) 242; see also Fuccocchi in this volume (221–30).

²⁰⁰ von Albrecht (1964) 21.

²⁰¹ Specifically the glory of Rome personified in Scipio Africanus: Wallace (1955) 296, 302 and (1957) 159, 161.

²⁰² Cf. von Albrecht (1964) 55.

²⁰³ E.g., Pichon (1908) 588; Owen (1909) 254; Mendell (1924) 93; Klotz (1927) 81; Bolaffi (1959) 227; Rostagni (1964) 42–54; Laudizi (1989) 95–140, who maintains that Hannibal is an anti-hero.

²⁰⁴ E.g., Feeney (1986b) 140–41 (various heroes); Currie (1958) 50 n. 1 (Scipio and Hannibal).

²⁰⁵ Tipping (1999) 97–149; see also Asso (179–92) and Tipping (193–218) in this volume.

²⁰⁶ Augoustakis (2001), (2003a), (2003b), (2006), (2008).

²⁰⁷ Augoustakis (2001) 5.

²⁰⁸ Dietrich (2005) 83.

²⁰⁹ Dietrich (2004) 2–7, 12–17, and 27–30; see also Ganiban (91–96) and Keith (365–66) in this volume.

of Dido's curse in the *Aeneid*.²¹⁰ In their studies both Augoustakis and Dietrich demonstrate the skill of Silius in integrating female models from earlier poets into the *Punica*.

The consideration of Silius' relationship with the principate, especially Domitian, eventually led scholars to consider the extent of the prevalence of political discourse in the *Punica*. Although Mendell and Laidlaw assert that the *Punica* is devoid of political commentary,²¹¹ and Schönberger asserts that the *Punica* is devoid of connection with contemporary life,²¹² critics began to recognize especially in the last third of the twentieth century that the poem responds to the political world. McDonald was the first scholar to argue meaningfully for the political and social relevance of the epic to Rome.²¹³ Representations of a city like Saguntum, of a senator like Varro, of an enemy like Carthage (cf. 10.657–58), and of a general like Scipio Africanus have encouraged critics to reflect on their relevance to political and moral behavior at Rome before and during Silius' life. While Silius clearly played his political hand in the text, critics have disputed the nature and degree of this politicization. The majority of scholars have taken a positive view of the contemporary political implications of the narrative,²¹⁴ including a figure such as Scipio Africanus. Recent critics have continued to view Scipio Africanus in a largely favorable light consistent generally with a positive view of the political implications of the epic as a whole. Bernstein views Scipio's divine filiation, commemoration of his ancestors, and his promotion of ethical virtues as a reflection of Domitian's program.²¹⁵ While Marks considers Rome's system of government as a concern to Silius,²¹⁶ he views Scipio as an exemplar of the type of leadership that the emperor should follow²¹⁷ and believes that the poet's objective is to show that Rome can prosper and even improve under the principate.²¹⁸

In the last fifteen years of the twentieth century a strand of scholarship began to emerge that examined the ambivalent political implica-

²¹⁰ Dietrich (2004) 28.

²¹¹ Mendell (1924) 93; Laidlaw (1951) 143.

²¹² Schönberger (1965) 137.

²¹³ I. R. McDonald (1971) 5–34, 165–67, especially 135–63.

²¹⁴ E.g., Mezzanotte (1995).

²¹⁵ Bernstein (2008) 134, 152, and 156.

²¹⁶ Marks (2005a) 251.

²¹⁷ Marks (2005a) 283.

²¹⁸ Marks (2005a) 252, 287.

tions of the *Punica*. McGuire examines various scenes in the *Punica* that are tinged with anti-imperial sentiment, such as the ambiguities in Silius' account of the siege of Saguntum in the first two books,²¹⁹ his use of names connected with civil war,²²⁰ and his description of various suicides.²²¹ Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy argue that Silius' depiction of contemporary Rome, though generally muted and implicit, has its origins in the rather unsavory incidents of the Second Punic War. This triad of scholars treats several themes of the *Punica* in detail with emphasis on Silius' use of characterization particularly in regard to Hannibal, Flaminius, Fabius, Paulus, Varro, Marcellus, Claudius Nero, and Scipio Africanus,²²² whose actions are interpreted in ambivalent and disquieting terms. They view Scipio as a prototype of leaders, such as Caesar and Pompey, who bring an end to the republic and usher in the imperial era with their desire for power and fame; thus Silius is viewed as portraying the gradual evolution of Rome from the mid-republic, with its traditional values already under challenge, to his own day, where even the pretence of such values no longer exists.²²³ Tipping maintains that Scipio is an epic superhero²²⁴ but cannot avoid being linked with powerful individuals in republican and imperial Rome (and elsewhere) who subsumed the state to themselves.²²⁵ McIntyre asserts that Silius uses the landscape to convey ambivalence at the assumption of power by personalities,²²⁶ while alluding at the same time to the need for strong leaders to ensure the survival of Rome.²²⁷ Dominik too emphasizes the politically ambivalent and unsettling aspects of the *Punica* in his discussions of the Saguntum and Cannae episodes and concludes that the unflattering implied narrative challenges contemporary Rome's public image as a divinely sanctioned moral power.²²⁸

²¹⁹ McGuire (1985) 27–76 and (1997) 207–19.

²²⁰ McGuire (1985) 77–147, (1995), and (1997) 136–44.

²²¹ McGuire (1985) 67–76, (1989) 33–41, and (1997) 205–229.

²²² Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2511–55; on the demagogues, see also Arimma in this volume (241–76).

²²³ Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2556–58.

²²⁴ Tipping (1999) 205–25.

²²⁵ Tipping (1999) 226–65.

²²⁶ McIntyre (2008) 202, 260.

²²⁷ McIntyre (2008) 192 and 260–61.

²²⁸ Dominik (2003) and (2006).

5. *Future directions and trends*

Scholarship on the *Punica* has made many advances in the second half of the twentieth century. Prejudice against the poem persists among scholars but is gradually being replaced by a more informed and sympathetic view. Critics who are prepared to examine the *Punica* in depth on its own merits instead of basing their views on previous criticism or on preconceived notions are generally much more positive in their assessment of the poem than those scholars who treat Silius in a literary survey. The progress made in the first half of the twentieth century was mainly philological and textual, while advances since then have been mainly in the areas of critical attitude and interpretation, textual analysis, and the contemporary relevance of the *Punica*. While Bassett and von Albrecht were instrumental in shifting critical attitudes to the *Punica* in the second half of the twentieth century, the major studies of Ripoll (1998a) and Marks (1999 and 2005a) have reminded the contemporary reader that Silius is a poet deserving of serious critical attention.

Much corrective and innovative work remains to be done. A translation of the *Punica* is needed in English, preferably matching the Latin line by line. There is a serious call for complete commentaries on all the books of the *Punica* except books 8 and 14: books 1, 9–10 and 17 represent particular opportunities because of their importance in the overall structure of the poem. The intertextual relationship between Silius and the other Flavian epicists is deserving of much closer attention, namely the influence of Statius' *Thebaid* and Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* upon the *Punica*.²²⁹ There is also room for additional consideration of Silius' use of mythology and aetiology in comparison with his epic predecessors. Such studies should continue to result in a greater critical appreciation of Silius' techniques of creative and multiple adaptation. This is especially the case in regard to the role of women in the *Punica* and their female models in Roman epic, which Augoustakis and Dietrich²³⁰ are presently examining. There is a need for further comparison of the women in the *Punica* with female figures in the other Flavian epics, which La Penna has attempted,²³¹ and how

²²⁹ See also Lovatt in this volume (176).

²³⁰ Augoustakis (2010); Dietrich (2010).

²³¹ La Penna (1981).

their representation may have been affected by the social and political context in which they were composed. In this type of investigation the application of feminist theory can also prove useful, as shown by Keith²³² and Augoustakis.²³³ Numerous other opportunities remain in Silian studies, for example, the relation of Rome to other cities in the *Punica*. Saguntum has been the focus of critical investigation more than any other city in the epic,²³⁴ but there is still scope for a detailed examination of how Silius represents cities such as Troy, Carthage, Capua, and Syracuse, a project that Cowan is currently undertaking in order to illustrate Silius' utilization of these cities to develop the idea of Rome.²³⁵ The scholarly outcome of these diverse approaches is certain to increase critical appreciation of Silius' poetic techniques and may help eventually to restore the standing and popularity of the *Punica* to the level it attained during the Renaissance.

²³² Keith (2000) 32, 56–57, 90–93, and 126–27.

²³³ Augoustakis (2001) and (2010).

²³⁴ von Albrecht (1964) 57–62 and 181–83; Vessey (1974b); Kißel (1979) 97–99; Küppers (1986) 107–70; McGuire (1989) 33–41 and (1997) 207–19; Cowan (2002) 28–33; Dominik (2003) and (2006).

²³⁵ Cowan (forthcoming).

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GENERAL INDEX

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